T. Craddock's
Book

THE FOURTH VOLUME

OF THE

WORKS

OF THE

Rev. JOHN FLETCHER.

The FIRST PART

OF AN

EQUAL CHECK

TO

Phariſaiſm and *Antinomianiſm*;

CONTAINING

I. An HISTORICAL ESSAY on the danger of parting FAITH and WORKS.

II. SALVATION by the COVENANT of GRACE, A DISCOURSE preached in the pariſh church of Madeley, April 18, and May 9, 1773.

III. A SCRIPTURAL ESSAY on the Rewardableneſs of Works, according to the Covenant of Grace.

IV. An ESSAY on TRUTH, or, A RATIONAL VINDICATION of the Doctrine of Salvation by Faith.

The armour of righteouſneſs on the right-hand, and on the left.

2 Cor. vi. 7.

By the Author of the CHECKS to ANTINOMIANISM.

THE THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed by G. PARAMORE, *North-Green, Worſhip-Street*; and ſold by G. WHITFIELD, at the New Chapel, City-Road; and at the Methodiſt Preaching-Houſes in Town and Country. 1795.

PREFACE.

I. THE firſt piece of this Check was deſigned for a preface to the Diſcourſe that follows it; but as it ſwelled far beyond my intention, I preſent it to the Reader under the name of *An hiſtorical Eſſay*; which makes way for the tracts that follow.

II. With reſpect to the *Diſcourſe*, I muſt mention what engages me to publiſh it. In 1771 I ſaw the propoſitions called *the Minutes*. Their author invited me to "*review the whole affair.*" I did ſo; and ſoon found, that I had "leaned too much towards Calviniſm," which, after a mature conſideration, appeared to me exactly to coincide with *ſpeculative* Antinomianiſm; and the ſame year I publicly acknowledged my error in theſe words:

"But whence ſprings this almoſt general Antinomianiſm of our congregations? Shall I conceal the ſore becauſe it feſters in *my own* breaſt? Shall I be partial? No: in the name of Him, who is no reſpecter of perſons, I will confeſs MY ſin, and that of *many* of my brethren, &c.—Is not the Antinomianiſm of hearers fomented by that of preachers? Does it not become *us* to take the greateſt part of the blame upon *ourſelves*, according to the old adage, *Like prieſt, like people?* Is it ſurpriſing that ſome of *us* ſhould have an Antinomian audience? Do *we* not make or keep it ſo? When did *we* preach ſuch a *practical* ſermon, as that of our Lord on the mount? Or write ſuch *cloſe* letters, as the epiſtles of St. John?" Second Check, p. 64 and 65, to the end of the paragraph.

When I had thus openly confeſſed, that I was involved in the guilt of *many of my brethren*, and that I had ſo leaned towards *ſpeculative*, as not to have made a proper ſtand againſt *practical* Antinomianiſm; who could have thought, that one of my moſt formidable

opponents would have attempted to screen his mistake, behind such passages of a manuscript sermon, which I preached twelve years ago; and of which, by some means or other, he has got a copy?

I am very far however from recanting that old discourse. I still think, the doctrine it contains excellent in the main, and very proper to be enforced [tho' in a more guarded manner] in a congregation of hearers violently prejudiced against the first gospel axiom. Therefore, out of regard for the grand, leading truth of Christianity, and in compliance with Mr. Hill's *earnest intreaty*, [Fin. Stroke, p. 45.] I send my sermon into the world, upon the following reasonable conditions: 1. That I shall be allowed to publish it, as I preached it a year ago in my church; namely, with *additions in brackets*, to make it at once a *fuller* check to Pharisaism, and a *finishing* check to Antinomianism: 2. That the largest addition shall be in favour of *free grace:* 3. That no body shall accuse me of *forgery*, for thus adding my present light to that which I had formerly; and for thus bringing out of my little treasure of experience *things new and old:* 4. That the press shall not groan with the charge of *disingenuity*, if I throw into notes some unguarded expressions, which I formerly used without scruple, and which my more enlightened conscience does not suffer me to use at present: 5. That my opponent's call to print my sermon, will procure me the pardon of the public, for presenting them with a plain, *blunt* discourse, composed for an audience chiefly made up of colliers and rustics: and lastly, That as I understand English a little better than I did twelve years ago, I shall be permitted to rectify a few French idioms, which I find in my old manuscript; and to *connect* my thoughts a little more like an Englishman, where I can do it without the least misrepresentation of the sense.

If these conditions appear unreasonable to those, who will have heaven itself without any condition, I abolish the distinction between my old sermon, and the additions that guard or strengthen it; and referring the reader to the title page, I publish my discourse on

Rom.

Rom. xi. 5, 6. as a *guarded* ſermon, delivered in my church on Sunday, April the 18th, &c. 1773, exactly eleven years after I preached upon the ſame text a ſermon uſeful upon the whole, but in ſome places unguarded, and deficient with reſpect to the *variety* of arguments and motives, by which the capital doctrines of *free grace* and *goſpel obedience* ought to be enforced.

III. With regard to the SCRIPTURAL ESSAY upon the rewardableneſs, or evangelical worthineſs of works, I ſhall juſt obſerve, that it attacks the grand miſtake of the Solifidians, countenanced by three or four words of my old ſermon. I pour a flood of ſcriptures upon it; and after receiving the fire of my objector, I return it in a variety of ſcriptural and rational anſwers, about the ſolidity of which the public muſt decide.

IV. The ESSAY on TRUTH will, I hope, reconcile judicious moraliſts to the doctrine of ſalvation *by faith*, and conſiderate Solifidians to the doctrine of ſalvation *by* the *works* of faith; reaſon and ſcripture concurring to ſhow the conſtant dependance of works upon faith; and the wonderful agreement of the doctrine of preſent ſalvation by TRUE *faith*, with the doctrine of eternal ſalvation by GOOD *works*.

* I hope, that I do not diſſent, in my obſervations upon *faith*, either from our church, or approved goſpel-miniſters. In their *higheſt* definitions of that grace, they conſider it *only* according to the fulneſs of the *Chriſtian* diſpenſation; but my ſubject has obliged me to conſider it alſo according to the diſpenſations of John the Baptiſt, Moſes, and Noah. Believers, under theſe *inferior* diſpenſations, have not always *aſſurance*; nor is the aſſurance they ſometimes have ſo bright as that of adult Chriſtians, Matt. xi. 11. But undoubtedly aſſurance is inſeparably connected with the faith of the *Chriſtian* diſpenſation, which was not *fully* opened till Chriſt opened *his* glorious baptiſm on the day of pentecoſt, and till his ſpiritual kingdom was ſet up with power in the hearts of his people. No body therefore can truly believe, according to *this* diſpenſation, without being *immediately* conſcious both of the forgiveneſs of ſins, and of peace and joy in the Holy Ghoſt. This

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is a moſt important truth, derided indeed by fallen churchmen, and denied by Laodicean diſſenters; but of late years glorioufly revived by Mr. Weſley and the miniſters connected with him: — A truth this, which cannot be too ſtrongly, and yet too warily inſiſted upon in our lukewarm and ſpeculative age: and as I would not obſcure it for the world, I particularly intreat the reader to mind the laſt *erratum*; without omitting the laſt but one, which guards the doctrine of *initial* ſalvation by abſolute *free grace*.

* I do not deſire to provoke my able opponents; but I muſt own, I ſhould be glad to reap the benefit of my *Checks*, either by finding an increaſe of religious ſobriety and mutual forbearance among thoſe, who make a peculiar profeſſion of faith in Chriſt; or by ſeeing my miſtakes [if I am miſtaken] brought to light, that I might no longer recommend them as goſpel-truths. With this view only, I humbly intreat my brethren and fathers in the church, to point out *by ſcripture* or *argument* the doctrinal errors, that may have crept into the *Equal Check*. But if, upon cloſe examination, they ſhould find, that it holds forth the two goſpel-axioms in due conjunction, and marks out the *evangelical mean* with ſtrict impartiality; I hope, the moderate and judicious, in the Calviniſtic and Anti-calviniſtic party, will ſo far unite upon this plan, as to keep on terms of reciprocal toleration, and brotherly kindneſs together; riſing with redoubled indignation, not one againſt another, but againſt thoſe peſts of the religious world, *prejudice* and *bigotry*, the genuine parents of implacable fanaticiſm, and bloody perſecution.

Madeley, May 21, 1774.

N. B. *I have conſiderably ſhortened the following tracts; and marked the moſt uſeful parts of them with a* *.

J. W.

AN

AN

HISTORICAL ESSAY,

Upon the importance and harmony of the two gospel-precepts, BELIEVE and OBEY; and upon the fatal consequences that flow from parting FAITH and WORKS.

WHEN the Gospel is considered as opposed to the error of the Pharisees, and that of the Antinomians, it may be summed up in the two following propositions: 1. In the day of conversion, we are saved freely as sinners [i. e. made freely partakers of the privileges that belong to our gospel dispensation in the church militant] thro' the merits of Christ, by a living faith. 2. In the day of judgment we shall be saved freely as saints, [i. e. made freely partakers of the privileges of our gospel dispensation in the church triumphant] thro' the merits of Christ, and by the evidence of evangelical works. Whence it follows: 1. That nothing can absolutely hinder our justification in a gospel-day, but the want of true faith; and 2. That nothing will absolutely hinder our justification in the day of judgment, but the want of good works. If I am not mistaken, all the evangelical doctrine of faith and works turns upon those propositions. They exactly answer to the grand directions of the gospel. Wilt thou enter into Christ's sheepfold? *Believe.*—Wilt thou stay there? *Believe and obey.*—Wilt thou be numbered among his sheep in the great day? *Endure unto the end: continue in well doing:* that is, persevere in faith and obedience.

* To *believe* then and *obey*, or as Solomon expresses it, "To fear God and keep his commandments, is the whole duty of man." Therefore a professor of faith without genuine obedience, and a pretender to obedience without genuine faith, equally miss their aim; while

Nor does St. James give us a leſs melancholly account of this fatal event. While faith ſlumbered "luſt conceived, and brought forth ſin, and ſin finiſhed, brought forth death," the death of faith, and conſequently the *moral death* of angelic ſpirits and human ſouls, who equally live by faith † during their ſtate of probation. So fell Lucifer from heaven, to rule and rage in the darkneſs of this world: ſo fell Adam from paradiſe, to toil and die in this vale of tears: ſo fell Judas from an apoſtolic throne, to hang himſelf and go to his own place.

Nor can we riſe but in a way parallel to that by which they fell. For, as a *diſbelief* of our CREATOR, productive of *bad works*, ſunk our firſt parents: ſo a *faith* in our REDEEMER, productive of *good works*, muſt raiſe their fallen poſterity.

* Should you aſk, which is moſt neceſſary to ſalvation, *faith* or *works?* I beg leave to propoſe a ſimilar queſtion. Which is moſt eſſential to breathing, *inſpiration* or *expiration?* If you reply, that "The moment either is abſolutely at an end, ſo is the other; and therefore both are equally important;" I return exactly the ſame anſwer. If *humble faith* receives the breath of ſpiritual life; *obedient love* gratefully returns it, and makes way for a freſh ſupply: when it does not, the ſpirit is *grieved*; and if this want of co-operation is perſiſted in to the end of *the day of ſalvation*, the ſin unto death is committed, the ſpirit is *quenched* in his ſaving operations, the apoſtate dies the ſecond

† Faith in God as *Creator*, *Lawgiver*, and *Judge*, was not leſs neceſſary to Lucifer and Adam in order to their ſtanding in a ſtate of innocence, than Faith in God as *Redeemer*, *Sanctifier*, and *Rewarder* of them that diligently ſeek him, is neceſſary to *ſinners*, in order to their recovery from a ſtate of guilt; or to *believers* in order to avoid relapſes and final apoſtaſy. Faith therefore, ſo far as it implies an unſhaken confidence in God, and a firm adherence to his will, is as eternal as love and obedience. But when it is conſidered as "the ſubſtance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not ſeen," which are eſſential properties of a believer's faith in this preſent ſtate of things, it is evident that it will neceſſarily end in ſight, as ſoon as the curtain of time is drawn up; and terminate in enjoyment, as ſoon as God's glory appears without a veil.

death

death, and his corrupt ſoul is caſt into the bottomleſs pit, as a putrid corpſe into the noiſome grave.

Again, if faith has the advantage over works by giving them birth, works have the advantage over faith by perfecting it. Seeſt thou, ſays St. James, ſpeaking of the Father of the faithful, "how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" And if St. Paul affirms, that *works* without faith are *dead*, St. James maintains, that *faith without works is dead alſo.*

Once more, Chriſt is always the primary, original, properly-meritorious cauſe of our juſtification and ſalvation. To diſpute it is to renounce the faith, and to plead for Antichriſt. And yet, to deny, under this primary cauſe, there are ſecondary, ſubordinate, inſtrumental cauſes of our juſtification, and conſequently of our ſalvation is to ſet the Bible aſide, and fly in the face of judicious Calviniſts, who cannot help maintaining it, both from the pulpit and from the preſs. Now, if in the day of our converſion *faith* is the ſecondary, ſubordinate cauſe of our acceptance *as perſevering ſaints.* Let us therefore equally decry dead faith and dead works, equally recommend living faith and its important fruits.

Hitherto I have endeavoured to check the rapid progreſs of ſpeculative Antinomianiſm, that perpetually decries works, and centers in the following paragraph, which preſents without diſguiſe the doctrine of the abſolute, unconditional perſeverance of adulterous believers, and inceſtuous ſaints.

Saving faith being immortal, cannot only ſubſiſt without the help of good works; but no aggravated crimes can give it a finiſhing ſtroke. A believer may in cool blood murder a man, after having ſeduced his wife, without expoſing himſelf to the leaſt real danger of forfeiting either his heavenly inheritance, or the divine favour: becauſe his *ſalvation*, which is *finiſhed in the full extent of the word*, without any of his good works, cannot poſſibly be fruſtrated by any of his evil ones.

It will not be improper now to attempt a check to Phariſaiſm, which perpetually oppoſes faith, and whoſe deſtructive errors collected in one poſition may run thus:—If people perform external acts of worſhip towards God, and of charity towards their neighbour; their principles are good enough: and ſhould they be faulty, theſe good works will make ample amends for that deficiency.——Upon this common plan of doctrine, if the filthy ſepulchre is but white-waſhed, and the noiſome grave adorned with a flowery turf, it little matters what is within, though it be *a dead man's bones*, a dead heart ſwelled with pride, or *all manner of corruption.*

It is hard to ſay, who do Chriſtianity moſt diſſervice, the Solifidians, who aſſert that works are nothing *before God*; or the Phariſees, who maintain that certain religious ceremonies, and external duties of morality, are the very ſoul of religion. O thou true believer, bear thy teſtimony againſt both their errors; and equally contend for the tree and the fruit, the faith of St. Paul and the works of St. James; remembring that if ever the gates of hell prevail againſt thee, it will be by making thee over-value faith and deſpiſe good works, or over-rate works and ſlight *precious faith.*

The world, I grant, is full of Gallios, eaſy or buſy men, who ſeldom trouble themſelves about faith or works, law or goſpel. Their latitudinarian principles perfectly agree with their looſe conduct: and if their volatile minds are fixed, it is only by a ſteady adherence to ſuch commandments as theſe: "Be not righteous over much:—Get and ſpend:—Marry or be given in marriage:—Eat and drink:—Lie down to ſleep and riſe up to play:—Care neither for heaven nor hell:—Mind all of earth but the awful ſpot allotted thee for a Grave: &c." However, while they punctually obſerve this decalogue, their conſcience is ſometimes awakened to a ſenſe of guilt, commonly called uneaſineſs, or low ſpirits: and if they cannot ſhake it off by new ſcenes of diſſipation, new plunges into ſenſual gratifications, new ſchemes

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of hurrying buſineſs; if a religious concern faſtens upon their breaſts, the tempter deludes them, by making his falſe coin paſs for the Gold *tried in the* Fire. If his dupes will have Faith, he makes them take up with that of the Antinomians. If they are for works, he recommends to them thoſe of the Self-righteous. And if ſome ſeem cut to be brands in the church, fiery, perſecuting zealots; though they have not as much faith as Simon Magus, or as many works as the conceited Phariſee; yet they may have as much zeal for the church as he who ſet out from Jeruſalem for Damaſcus in purſuit of heretics. They may ſometimes purſue thoſe, who diſſent from them, even unto ſtrange cities.

Has not the world always ſwarmed with thoſe devotees, who, blindly following after Faith without loving obedience, or after Obedience without loving faith, have made havock of the Church, and driven myriads of worldly men to a ſettled contempt of godlineſs: while a few, by equally ſtanding up for true faith and univerſal obedience, have kept up the honour of religion in the world? Take a general view of the church, and you will ſee this obſervation confirmed by a variety of black, bright, and mixt characters.

The firſt man born of a woman, is a ſtriking picture of perverted mankind. He is at once a ſullen Phariſee, and a groſs Antinomian: he ſacrifices to God, and murders his brother. Abel, the illuſtrious type of converted ſinners, true believers, and acceptably ſacrifices, Faith and Works ſhine in his life with equal luſtre; and in his death we ſee what good men may expect from the impious church and the pious world. Protomartyr for the doctrine of this check, he falls the firſt victim to Phariſaical pride and Antinomian fury. The ſons of God mix with the daughters of men, learn their works, and make ſhipwreck of the faith. Enoch nevertheleſs truly believes in God, and humbly walks with him: Faith and Works equally adorn his character. The world is ſoon full of miſbelief, and the earth of violence. Noah how-

ever believes and works; he credits God's word, and builds the ark. This Work "condemns the world, and he becomes heir of the righteousness which is by Faith."

Consider Abraham; see how he believes and works! God speaks, and he leaves his house, his friends, and native country. His faith works by love: he exposes his life to recover his neighbour's property, he readily gives up to Lot his right of choice to prevent a quarrel; he earnestly intercedes for Sodom, he charitably hopes the best of its wicked inhabitants, he gladly entertains strangers, humbly washes their feet, diligently instructs his household, and submissively offers up Isaac his favourite son, the child of his old age, the hope of his family, his own heir, and that of God's promise: by these works his faith is made perfect, and he deserves to be called the Father of the Faithful.

Moses treads in his steps: he believes, quits Pharaoh's court, and suffers affliction with the people of God. Under his conduct the Israelites believe, obey, and cross the Red Sea with an high hand; but soon after they murmur, rebel, and provoke divine vengeance. Thus the destruction, which they had avoided in Goshen through *obedient Faith*, they meet with in the wilderness through *the works of unbelief*. Nature is up in arms to punish their backslidings. The pestilence, the sword, earthquakes, fiery serpents, and fire from heaven, combine to destroy the ungrateful, Antinomian apostates.

In the days of Joshua, that eminent type of Christ, Faith and Works are happily reconciled; and whilst they walk hand in hand, Israel is invincible, the greatest difficulties are surmounted, and the land of promise is conquered, divided and enjoyed.

Under the next Judges, faith and works seldom meet; but as often as they do, a deliverance is wrought in Israel. Working believers carry all before them: They can do all things through the Lord strengthening them: but if they suffer the Antinomian Delilah to cut off their locks, you may apply to them the awful words of David, (spoken to magistrates who forsake

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the way of righteouſneſs:) "I have ſaid, Ye are God's, and all of you are children of the Moſt High; but ye ſhall die like men, and fall like one of the princes;" like Zimri, or Corah, Dathan, or Abiram.

The character of Samuel, the laſt of the Judges, is perfect. From the cradle to the grave he believes and works; he ſerves God and his generation. His ſons, like thoſe of Eli, halt in practice, and their faith is an abomination to God and man. David believes, works, and kills the blaſpheming Philiſtine. He ſlides into Antinomian faith, wantonly ſeduces a married woman, and perfidiouſly kills an honeſt man. Solomon follows him in the narrow path of working faith, and in the broad way of ſpeculative and practical Antinomianiſm. The works of the ſon correſpond with thoſe of the father. Happy for him, if the repentance of the idolatrous king, equalled that of his adulterous parent!

In the days of Elijah, the gates of hell ſeemed to have prevailed againſt the church. Queen Jezebel had cut off the prophets of the Lord, and appointed 400 chaplains to king Ahab, who ſhared the dainties of the royal table, and therefore found it eaſy to demonſtrate, that pleading for Baal was orthodoxy, and perſecuting honeſt Naboth as a blaſphemer of God and the king, was an inſtance of true loyalty. But even then all were not loſt: Seven thouſand men ſhewed their faith by their works; they firmly believed in Jehovah, and ſteadily refuſed bowing the knee to Baal.

In the days of Iſaiah and Jeremiah, wickedneſs, perſecution, and imaginary good works, prevailed under a ſhow of zeal for the temple. But even then there was a ſmall remnant of believing and working ſouls, who ſet fire to the ſtubble of wickedneſs during the pious reigns of Hezekiah and Joſiah.

Follow the choſen nation to Babylon. They all profeſs the faith ſtill: but how few believe and work! Some do however: and by their work of faith and patience of hope, they quench the violence of the fire, and ſtop the mouth's of lions: and what is more ex-

traordinary ſtill, they ſtrike with aſtoniſhment a fierce tyrant, a Nebuchadnezzar; they fill with wonder a cowardly king, a Darius; and diſarming the former of his rage, the latter of his fears, they ſweetly force them both to confeſs the true God among their idolatrous courtiers, and throughout their immenſe dominions.

In the days of Herod, the double deluſion is at the height. John the Baptiſt boldly bears his teſtimony againſt it in the wilderneſs, and our Lord upon the mount, in the temple, and every where. But alas! what is the conſequence? By detecting the Antinomianiſm of the Phariſees, and the Phariſaiſm of Antinomians, he makes them deſperate. The ſpirit of Cain riſes with tenfold fury againſt an innocence, far ſuperior to that of Abel. Phariſees and Herodians muſt glut their malice with his blood. He yields to their rage; and while he *puts away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf*, he condeſcends to die a martyr for the right Faith, and the true Works: he ſeals, as a dying *prieſt*, the truth of the two goſpel axioms, which he had ſo often ſealed as a living *prophet*, and continues to ſeal as an eternal Melchiſedec.

The apoſtles, by precept and example, powerfully enforce their Lord's doctrine and practice. Their lives are true copies of their exhortations: Their deepeſt ſermons are only exact deſcriptions of their behaviour. It is hard to ſay which excite men moſt to *believe* and *obey*, their ſeraphic *diſcourſes* or their angelic *conduct*. Their labours are crowned with general ſucceſs. Judaiſm and Heatheniſm fall under the *thunder* of their *words of faith*, and the ſhining power (might I not ſay the lightning) of their works of love. Thus the world is turned upſide down before faith and works; "the times of refreſhing come from the preſence of the Lord;" and earth, curſed as it is, becomes a paradiſe for obedient believers.

* Hell trembles at the revolution; and before all is loſt, Satan haſtens to transform himſelf into an angel of light. In that diſguiſe, he puts his uſual ſtratagem in execution, againſt the believing, working,

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and suffering church. He instills speculative faith, pleads for relaxed manners, puts the badge of contempt upon the daily cross, and gets the immense body of the Gnostics and Laodiceans into his snare. Sad and sure is the consequence. The genuine works of faith are neglected: idle works of men's invention are substituted for those of God's commandments. And fallen churches, through the smooth way of Antinomianism, return to the covert way of Pharisaism, or to the broad way of infidelity.

Such was the deplorable condition of the western church when Luther appeared. True faith was dethroned by superstitious fancy; and all the works of the former were well nigh choaked by the thorns that sprang from the latter. The zealous reformer with his sharp scythe cut them down through a considerable part of Germany. His terribly successful weapon, which had already done some execution in the Netherlands, France and Italy, might have reached Rome itself, if the effects of his unguarded preaching had not dreadfully broke out around him in the North.

* There the balance of the evangelical precepts was lost. Solifidians openly prevailed. Our Lord's sermon upon the mount, and St. James's epistle, were either explained away, or wished out of the Bible. The amiable, practical *law of Christ*, was perpetually confounded with the terrible, impracticable *law of innocence:* and the avoidable penalties of the former, were represented as one with the dreadful curse of the latter, or with the abrogated ceremonies of the Mosaic dispensation. Then the law was publicly wedded to the devil, and poor Protestant Solifidians were taught to bid equal defiance to both.

The effect soon answered the cause. Lawless believers, known under the name of Anabaptists, arose in Germany. They fancied themselves the elect people of God; they were compleat in Christ: their election was absolutely made sure; all things were theirs; and they went about in religious mobs to deliver people from *legal bondage*, and bring them into *gospel-liberty*; which, in their opinion, was a liberty

to defpife all laws divine and human, and to do, every one, what was right in his own eyes. Luther was fhocked, and cried out; but the mifchief was done, and the Reformation difgraced: nor did he perfeveringly apply the proper remedy pointed out in the minutes, falvation not by the merit of works, but by the works of faith as a condition.

Nevertheleſs he was wife enough to give up the root of the mifchief, in the articles of religion, prefented to the Emperor Charles the Vth at Augſburg, whence they were called the Augſburg-confeſſion. In the XIIth of thoſe articles, which treats of repentance, we find theſe remarkable words, "We teach touching repentance, that thoſe who have finned after baptiſm, may obtain the forgiveneſs of their ſins, *as often as* they are converted, &c." Again, "We condemn the Anabaptiſts, who ſay, that thoſe who have been once juſtified can no more loſe the holy Spirit."

This doctrine clearly opened, and frequently inforced, might have ſtopped the progreſs of Antinomianiſm. But alas! Luther did not often inſiſt upon it, and ſometimes he ſeemed even to contradict it. In the mean time Calvin came up; and though I muſt do him the juſtice to acknowledge, that he ſeldom went the length of modern Calviniſts in ſpeculative Antinomianiſm, yet he made the matter worſe, by advancing many propoſitions about abſolute decrees, and the neceſſary perſeverance of backſliding believers.

* This doctrine, which, together with its appendages, ſo nicely reconciles Baal and free grace; which ſlyly parts *faith* and *works*, while it decently unites *Chriſt* and *Belial*, could not but be acceptable to carnal Proteſtants: and to make it paſs with others, it was pompouſly decorated with the name of *the doctine of grace:* and *free grace-preachers*, as they called themſelves, inſinuated that St. James's doctrine of *Faith being dead without works*, was a doctrine of wrath, an uncomfortable doctrine, which none but "proud juſticiaries" and rank papiſts could maintain. Time would fail to mention all the books that were

indirectly

indirectly written againſt it: or to relate all the abuſe that was indirectly thrown upon thoſe two propoſitions of St. Paul, "Whatſoever a man ſoweth that ſhall he alſo reap," and, "If ye live after the fleſh, ye ſhall die."

Let it ſuffice to obſerve, that by theſe means the helliſh ſower of Antinomian tares prevailed. Thouſands of good men were carried away by the ſtream. And, what is more ſurpriſing ſtill, not a few of the wiſe and learned, favoured, embraced, and defended the Antinomian deluſion.

* Thus what Luther's ſolifidian zeal had begun, and what Calvin's predeſtinarian miſtakes had carried on, was completed by the ſynod of Dort; and the Antinomianiſm of many Proteſtants, was not leſs confirmed by that aſſembly of Calviniſtic divines, than the phariſaiſm of many Papiſts, had been before by the council of Trent.

* It is true, that as ſome good men in the church of Rome, have boldly withſtood phariſaical errors, and openly pleaded for ſalvation by grace through faith: ſo ſome good men in the Proteſtant churches, have ſteadily reſiſted Antinomian deluſions, and publickly defended the doctrine of ſalvation, not by the proper merit of works, but by the works of faith as a condition. But alas! as the Popes of Rome cruſhed, or excommunicated the former, almoſt as faſt as they aroſe; ſo have petty Proteſtant Popes blackened, or ſilenced the latter. The true Quakers, from their firſt appearance, made as firm a ſtand againſt the Antinomians, as the Valdenſes did againſt the Papiſts; and it is well known, that the Antinomians, who went from England to America with many pious Puritans, whipt the Quakers, men and women, cut off their ears, made againſt them a law of baniſhment upon pain of death, and upon that tyrannical law hanged four of their preachers, three men and one woman † in the laſt century, for preaching up the Chriſtian perfection of faith and obedience, and ſo

† Their names were William Leddra, Marmaduke Stephenſon, William Robinſon, and Mary Dyer.

diſturbing

disturbing the peace of the elect, who were *at ease in Sion*, or rather *in Babel*.

I need not mention the title of *heretic*, with which that learned and good man Arminius is to this day dignified, for having made a firm and noble stand against wanton Free Grace. The banishment or deprivation of Grotius, Episcopius, and other Dutch divines, is no secret. And it is well known that in England, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Wesley, and Mr. Sellon, are to this day *an abhorrence to all* Antinomian *flesh*.

* I am sorry to say, that, all things considered, these good men have been treated with as much severity by Protestant Antinomians, as ever Luther, Melancthon, and Calvin, were by Popish Pharisees: The Antinomian and Pharisaic spirit run as much into one, as the two arms of a river that embraces an island: If they divide for a time, it is only to meet again, and encrease their mutual rapidity. I beg leave to speak my whole mind. It is equally clear from scripture and reason, that we must *believe*, in order to be saved consistently with God's *mercy*; and that we must *obey*, in order to be saved consistently with his *holiness*. These propositions are the immoveable basis of the two gospel-axioms. Now if I reject either of them, it little matters which; if I blow my brains out, what signifies it, whether I do it by clapping the mouth of a pistol to my right, or to my left temple?

* Error moves in a circle: extremes meet in one. A warm, Popish Pharisee, and a zealous, Protestant Antinomian, are nearer each other than they imagine. The one will tell you, that by going to mass and confession, he can get a fresh absolution from the priest, for any sin that he shall commit: the other, whose mistake is still more pleasing to flesh and blood, assures you, that he has already got an eternal absolution, so that "under every state and circumstance he can possibly be in, he is justified from all things, his sins are for ever and for ever cancelled!"

But if they differ a little, they have the honour of agreeing in the main point. For, although the one

makes

makes a great noiſe about faith and free grace, and the other about works and true charity, they exactly meet in uncharitableneſs. The Phariſeee in Jeruſalem aſſerts, that "out of the Jewiſh church there can be no ſalvation," and his companions in ſelf-election heartily ſay, Amen! The Phariſee in Rome declares, that "there is no ſalvation out of the Romiſh church," and all the Catholic elect ſet their ſeal to the decree. And the Antinomian in London, inſinuates, if not affirms, that there is no ſalvation out of the Calviniſtic, predeſtinarian church. Hence, if you oppoſe his principles in ever ſo ſcriptural a manner, he ſuppoſes that you are "quite dark," that all your holineſs is "ſelf-made," and all your "righteouſneſs a cobweb ſpun by a poor ſpider out of its own bowels:" and if he allows you a chance for your ſalvation, it is only upon a ſuppoſition, that you may yet repent of your oppoſition, and turn Calviniſt before you die. But might not an inquiſitor be as charitable? Might he not hope that the poor heretic, whom he has condemned to the flames, may yet be ſaved, if he cordially kiſſes a crucifix, and ſays Ave Maria at the ſtake?

And now, candid reader, look around, and ſee what theſe ſeemingly oppoſite errors have done for Chriſt's church. Before the reformation, Chriſtendom was overſpread with ſuperſtition and fanaticiſm; and ſince, with lukewarmneſs and infidelity. But let us deſcend to particulars.

What has Phariſaiſm done for the church of Rome? It has publicly rent from her all the Proteſtant kingdoms, and ſecretly turned againſt her an innumerable multitude of Deiſts: for while bigots continue ridiculous bigots ſtill; men of wit, headed by ingenious Infidels, continually pour contempt upon Chriſtianity, through the wounds which they give to Popery. They repreſent Chriſt's rational and humane religion as one of the worſt in the world, unjuſtly charging it with the perſecuting ſpirit, and horrible maſſacres of thoſe Catholics ſo called, who mangling the truth, and running away with one half of Chriſtian divi-

nity,

nity, disgrace the whole by childish fooleries, and worse than barbarian uncharitableness.

And what does Pharisaism for the Protestant churches? So far as it prevails, spreads it not around its fatal leaven, a general indifference about heartfelt religion? Turns it not the lively oracles of God into a dead letter, the sacraments into empty ceremonies, the means of grace into rattles to quiet a guilty conscience, the precious blood of Christ into a common thing, external devotion into a cloak for secret hypocrisy; and some acts of apparent benevolence into the rounds of a ladder, the bottom of which reaches hell, and behold spiritual fiends (all manner of diabolical tempers) are seen continually *ascending and descending on it?*

Does it not incline us to despise those who are eminently pious, as if they were out of their senses; to despair of those who are notoriously wicked, as if they were absolute reprobates; and to prefer a popular imitator of Barabbas, to a meek follower of Jesus? Does it not prompt us to lay an undue stress upon trifles, and to make an endless ado about some frivolous circumstance of external worship, while we pass over judgment, mercy, and the love of God? And by that means, does it not confirm modern Herodians in their Antinomianism, and modern Sadducees in their infidelity? In a word, does it not render the stiff neck stiffer, the blind understanding blinder, the proud spirit more rebellious, more indifferent about mercy, more averse to gospel-grace, readier for all the curses of the law, and riper for all the woes of the gospel?

But let us consider the other extreme. What has Calvinism done for Geneva? Alas! It has, in a great degree, driven it into Arianism, Socinianism, and Infidelity. See the account lately given of it in the *French Encyclopedia*; *Article Geneva*. "Many of the "clergy of Geneva (says judicious Mr. D'Alembert) "no longer believe the divinity of Jesus Christ, of "which Calvin their leader was a zealous defender, "and for which he had Servetus burned, &c.—They "believe that there are punishments in another world,

"but

" but only for a limited time; thus purgatory, which " was one of the chief cauſes of the reformation, is " now the only puniſhment which many Proteſtants " admit after death. A new proof this, that a man " is a being full of contradictions. To ſum up all in " one word, the religion of many paſtors at Geneva, " is *perfect Socinianiſm.*"

What good has Calviniſm done in England? Alas; very little. When a bow is bent beyond its proper degree of tenſion, does it not fly back? When you violently pull a tree towards the weſt, if it recovers itſelf, does it not violently fly to the eaſt? Has not this generally been the caſe with reſpect to all the truths of God, which have been forced out of their ſcriptural place? Calviniſm in the days of Oliver Cromwell, was at the very ſame height of ſplendor, which Popery had attained in the days of King Henry the VIIIth, and they ſhare the ſame downfall. *Mole ruunt ſua.* At the reformation the FIRST grand doctrine of Chriſtianity, *(ſalvation by grace through faith)* which had been forced out of its place, and almoſt broken by the Papiſts, fled back upon them with ſuch violence, that it ſhook the holy See, frightened the Pope, and made ſome of the richeſt jewels fall from his triple crown. In like manner the SECOND grand doctrine of Chriſtianity *(ſalvation not by the merit of works, but by the works of faith as a condition)* which had been ſerved by the Antinomians juſt as the firſt goſpel axiom by the Papiſts, recovering itſelf out of their hands, flew back upon them with uncommon violence at King Charles's reſtoration, by an indirect blow ſhook two thouſand Calviniſt-miniſters out of their pulpits; and getting far beyond its ſcriptural place, began to bear hard upon, and even thruſt out the grand doctrine of *ſalvation by grace.* Thus, the abſurdity and miſchief of Antinomianiſm, began to drive again the generality of Engliſh Proteſtants into Phariſaiſm, Arianiſm, Socinianiſm, or open Infidelity; that is, into the ſtate, in which moſt of the learned are at Rome and Geneva.

I grant, that near forty years ago some clergymen from the university of Oxford, returned to the principles of the reformation, and zealously contended again for *salvation by grace* and for *universal obedience*. By the divine blessing upon their indefatigable endeavours, *faith* and *works* met again, and for some time walked undisturbed together. A little revolution then took place: *practical Christianity* revived, and leaning upon her fair daughters *Truth* and *Love*, took a solemn walk through the kingdom, and gave a foretaste of heaven to all that cordially entertained her.

She might, by this time, have turned this favourite isle into a land flowing with spiritual milk and honey, if Apollyon disguised in his angelic robes, had not played, and did not continue to play his old game. Nor does he do it in vain. By his insinuations, men of a contrary turn, rise against *Practical Christianity*. Many of the devout call her *Heresy*, and many of the gay name her *rank Enthusiasm*. In the mean time she drops a tear of tender pity, prays for her mistaken persecutors, and quietly retires into the wilderness. Lean *Obedience* is soon driven after her to make more room for speculative *Faith*, who is so highly fed with luscious food and wild honey, that she is quite bloated, and full of humours. Nay, in some she is degenerated into an impatient quarrelsome something, which calls itself *Orthodoxy*, or *the Truth*, and must be treated with the greatest respect; while *Charity*, cold, sickly, and almost starved for want of *work*, is hardly used with common good manners.

* In a word, *Antinomian Christianity* is come, and makes her public entry into the professing church. A foolish virgin, who assumes the name of *Free Grace*, walks before her, and cries, "Bend the knee, bow the heart, and entertain the old, the pure, the only gospel!" An ugly black boy, called *Free Wrath*, bears her enormous train, and with wonderful art hides himself behind it. While thousands are taken with the smiles and chearfulness of *Wanton Free Grace* [for that is the virgin's right name] and for her sake welcome her painted mother; a grey-headed Seer

passes

passes by, fixes his keen eyes upon the admired family, sees through their disguise, and warns his friends. This is highly resented, not only by all the lovers of the sprightly, alluring maid, but by some excellent people, who, in the simplicity of their hearts, mistake her for the celestial virgin *Astrea*. Mr. Hill, and Mr. Toplady, two of her champions, fall upon the aged Monitor; and to the great entertainment of the Pharisaic and Antinomian World, do their best to tread down his honour in the dust.

* While they are thus employed, a rough countryman, who had taken the Seer's warning, throws himself full in the way of Antinomian Christianity, tries to stop her in her triumphant march. Wanton Free Grace is a little disconcerted at his rudeness, she reddens, and soon shews herself the true sister of Free Wrath. To be revenged of the clown, she charges him with—guess what—A rape? No, but with being great with the scarlet whore, and concerned with the Romish man of sin! If he is acquitted of these enormities, they say that she is determined to indict him for murder or "forgery;" and if that will not do, for highway robbery, or "execrable Swiss slander." The mountaineer, who counts not his life dear, stands his ground, and in the scuffle discovers the black boy, lays fast hold of him, and notwithstanding the good words that he gives one moment, and the floods of invectives, which he pours out the next; he drags him out to public view, and appeals to the Christian world. *Et adhuc sub judice lis est.*

But leaving England, the scene of the present controversy, I ask, What does Calvinism at this day for Scotland, were national honours are paid to it, and where for some ages it has passed for the pure gospel? Alas! not much, if we may depend upon the observations of a gentleman of piety and fortune, who went last year with an eminent minister of Christ, to inspect the state of spiritual Christianity in the north, and brought back this melancholy account: "The decay of vital religion is yet more visible in Scotland than in England."

* Should by this time ſome of my readers be ready to aſk, what Arminianiſm has done for Holland and England, I reply: If by Arminianiſm you mean the pure doctrine of Chriſt, eſpecially the doctrine of our free juſtification thro' Chriſt, by the inſtrumentality of faith in the day of a ſinner's converſion, and by the evidence of the works of faith afterwards: if you mean, as I do, a ſyſtem of evangelical truth, in which the two goſpel precepts *believe* and *obey*, are duly balanced, and *faith* and *works* kept in their ſcriptural place; I anſwer that, under Chriſt, it has done all the good which has been done, not only in Holland and England, but in all Chriſtendom.

* Be not then miſtaken: When miniſters, leaning towards ſpeculative Antinomianiſm, have done good; it has not been by preaching wanton free grace, and by ſhackling the free goſpel: but by powerfully inforcing the truth as it is in Jeſus; by crying aloud, "Believe, thou loſt ſinner, and be ſaved by grace:—Obey, thou happy believer, and evidence thy ſalvation by works:—And whoſoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely; for all things are now ready."—So far as they have ſtarted aſide from this guarded, and yet encouraging goſpel, they have pulled down with one hand what they built with the other; they have tried to make up the Phariſaic, by widening the Antinomian gap; they have departed from what we call Chriſtianity, and what you are at full liberty to call Arminianiſm, Baxterianiſm, or Weſleianiſm.

* To return: I obſerved juſt now, that Antinomianiſm drives us into Phariſaiſm, Socianiſm, and Infidelity; but might I not have added Fataliſm, the higheſt degree of faſhionable Infidelity? And after all, what is Fataliſm, in which the greateſt Infidels unanimouſly ſhelter themſelves in our day? Is it not the beginning or the end of high Calviniſm, whoſe emblematical repreſentation may be a ſerpent forming a circle while it bites its tail, with this motto, *In ſeſe volvitur error, After a large circuit Error ends where it*

it began? If high *Calviniſm* is the *head*, is not *Fataliſm* the *tail?*

For my part, I ſhall not wonder if ſome of our high Predeſtinarians find themſelves before they are aware, even at Hobbe's or Voltaire's feet, humbly learning there the horrible leſſons of Fataliſm. Nay, if I am not miſtaken, they perfectly agree with the French philoſopher in the capital point. One might think that they have converted him to their orthodoxy, or that he has perverted them to his infidelity. Candid reader, judge of it by the following extract of his lecture on Deſtiny.

"Homer (ſays he) is the firſt writer, in whoſe works we find the notions of fate. It was then in vogue in his time. Nor was it adopted by the Phariſees, till many years after: for theſe Phariſees themſelves, who were the firſt men of letters among the Jews, were not very ancient, &c. But philoſophers needed neither the help of Homer, nor that of the Phariſees, to perſuade themſelves, that all things happen by immutable decrees, that *all is fixed. that all is neceſſary.*" Now for the proof. "Bodies, (adds he) tend to the center, pear-trees can never bear pine-apples, a man cannot have above a certain number of teeth."—And directly flying from *teeth* to *ideas*, he would have us infer, that we can no more arrange, combine, alter, or diſmiſs our ideas, than our grinders, and that an adulterer defiles his neighbour's bed as *neceſſarily* as a pear-tree produces pears.—He even adds, "If thou couldſt alter the deſtiny of a fly, thou ſhouldſt be more powerful than God himſelf." See *Dictionaire Philoſophique portatif*, Londres, 1764. Page 163, 164.

This ingenious Infidel is quite as *orthodox* (in the Calviniſtic ſenſe of the word) in his article on *Liberty*. "What does then your free will conſiſt in (ſays he) if it is not in a power to do *willingly* what *abſolute neceſſity* makes you chuſe?" Nay, he is ſo ſtaunch a Predeſtinarian, ſo compleat a Fataliſt, that he maintains, no one can chuſe *even or odd*, without an irreſiſtible order of all-directing fate. And he concludes

by affirming, that all, "*liberty of indifference*," that is, all power to do a thing, or to leave it undone at our option, without the neceſſitating agency of fate, "*is arrant nonſenſe.*" See the ſame book, page 243, &c.

* Thus the moſt ſubtle, ſelf-righteous Infidel in France, by going full eaſt; and the moſt rigid, thorough-paced Antinomian in England, by going full weſt, in the ways of error, meet at laſt face to face in the Antipodes of truth. O may the ſhock cauſed by their unexpected encounter, wake them both out of their fatal dreams, to call upon him, who takes the wiſe in their own craftineſs, imparts true wiſdom to the ſimple, and crowns the humble with grace and glory.

As high Calviniſm on the left hand falls in with Fataliſm, ſo on the right hand it runs into the wildeſt notions of ſome deluded Myſtics, and ranting Perfectioniſts. Judicious reader, you will be convinced of it by the following propoſitions, advanced by Molinos †, the father of thoſe Myſtics and Perfectioniſts, who are known abroad under the name of Quietiſts. Theſe poſitions, among many others, were condemned by the Pope as "raſh, offenſive to pious ears, erroneous, ſcandalous, &c." I extract them from the Bull of his Holineſs, given at Rome 1687, and publiſhed by the archbiſhop of Cambray at the end of his book called *Inſtruction paſtorale*, printed at Amſterdam 1698. See page 192, &c.

"*Velle operari active eſt Deum offendere, qui vult eſſe ſolus agens, &c.* To deſire to be active and work, is to offend God, who will be the ſole agent, &c.—Our natural activity ſtands in the way of grace, and hinders the divine operation and true perfection, *quia Deus vult operari in nobis ſine nobis*, becauſe God will work in us without us. — The ſoul ought not to think upon rewards and puniſhments. — We muſt

† He was a pious, but injudicious clergyman of the church of Rome, who, in ſome of his works, ſpoiled the doctrine of *grace* by Calviniſtic refinements; and that of *Chriſtian perfection* by Antinomian rant.

leave

leave to God the care of all that concerns us, that he may do in us, without us, his divine will.—He that will be resigned to God's will, must not ask him any thing, because petitions favour of our own will, and therefore are *imperfect*;" (or, to speak in the Calvinistic way, *sinful.*)

Again, "God to humble and transform us, permits and wills, that the devil should do violence to the bodies of some perfect souls" (i. e. *established believers*) "and should make them commit carnal actions against their will.—God now sanctifies his saints by the ministry of devils, who by causing in their flesh the above-mentioned violent impulses, makes them despise themselves the more, &c.—St. Paul felt such violent impulses in his body: hence he wrote, *The good that I would, I do not; and the evil which I would not, I do.* These violent impulses are the best means to humble the soul to nothing, and to bring it to true holiness, and the divine union; there is no other way, *et hæc est via facilior et tutior*, and this is the easier and the safer way.—David, &c. suffered such violent impulses to external impure actions, &c."

Who does not see here some of the most absurd tenets, or dangerous consequences of Calvinism! Man is a mere machine in the work of salvation:—The body of holy Paul is sold under sin:—David in Uriah's bed is complete and perfect in Christ:—Actual adultery humbles believers, and is an excellent mean of sanctification, &c.

When we see Antinomianism thus defiling the founder part of the Romish and Protestant churches: when the god of this world avails himself of these "Antinomian dotages," to confirm myriads of stiff Pharisees in their self-righteous delusions; and when the bulk of men, shocked at the glaring errors of both, run for shelter to Deism, and gross Infidelity; who would not desire to see the doctrines of *faith* and *works*, *grace* and *obedience* so stated and reconciled, that Men of Reason might no longer be offended at Christianity; nor *men of religion* one at another?

This

This is again *attempted* in the following discourse, the substance of which was committed to paper many years ago, to convince the Pharisees and Papists of my parish, that there is no salvation by the faithless works of the law, but by a living faith in Jesus Christ. With shame I confess, that I did not *then* see the need of guarding the doctrine of *faith*, against the despisers of *works*. I was chiefly bent upon pulling up the tares of Pharisaism: Those of Antinomianism were not yet sprung up in the field, which I began to cultivate; or my want of experience hindered me from discerning them. But since, what a crop of them have I perceived and bewailed!

* Alas! they have in a great degree ruined the success of my ministry. I have seen numbers of lazy seekers, enjoying the dull pleasure of sloth on the couch of wilful unbelief, under pretence that God was to do all in them without them. I have seen some lie flat in the mire of sin, absurdly boasting that they could not fall; and others make the means of grace, means of idle gossiping or sly courtship. I have seen some turn their religious profession into a way of gratifying covetousness or indolence; and others, their skill in church-music, their knowledge, and their zeal, into various nets to catch esteem, admiration, and praise. Some have I seen making *yesterday's* faith a reason to laugh at the cross *to-day*; and others drawing from their misapprehensions of the atonement, arguments to be less importunate in secret prayer and more conformable to this evil world, than once they were. Nay, I have seen some professing believers backward to do those works of mercy, which I have sometimes found persons, who made no profession of godliness, quite ready to perform. And Oh! tell it in Sion, that watchfulness may not be neglected by believers, that fearfulness may seize upon backsliders, and that trembling may break the bones of hypocrites and apostates; I have seen those, who had equally shined by their gifts and graces, strike the moral world with horror by the grossest Antinomianism;

mianism; and disgrace the doctrine of *salvation thro' faith*, by the deepest plunges into scandalous sin.

Candid Reader, I need say no more, to make *thee* sensible of the necessity of the *additions* and *notes*, by which I have strengthened and guarded my old discourse, that it might be an EQUAL CHECK *to Pharisaism and Antinomianism*, an equal prop to *faith* and *works*. If it affords thee any edification, give God the glory, and pray for the despised author. Ask in the words of good Bishop Hopkins, that I may so "BELIEVE, so rest on the merits of Christ, as if I had never wrought any thing; and withal so WORK, as if I were only to be saved by my own merits." And O! ask it again and again, for I find it *a difficult thing, to give to each of these its due in my practice.* It is the very depth and height of Christian Perfection.

END OF THE ESSAY.

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Salvation

Salvation by the Covenant of Grace:

A DISCOURSE

On ROMANS xi. 5, 6.

Even ſo then, at this preſent time alſo, there is a remnant according to the election of grace: And if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwiſe grace is no more grace: But if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwiſe work is no more work.

INTRODUCTION and DIVISION.

THE Apoſtle complains in the preceding chapter, that Iſrael was blinded, and did not ſee the way of ſalvation: "I *bear them record*, ſays he, Rom. x. 2, *that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge; for being ignorant of God's righteouſneſs*, i. e. of God's way of ſaving ſinners merely through Jeſus Chriſt, *and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs*, i. e. endeavouring to ſave themſelves by their own good works [ſo called] *they have not ſubmitted to the righteouſneſs of God*,"—to that faith in Chriſt, which makes ſinners righteous before God: "*for Chriſt*, adds he, *is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth*," Rom. x. 4; That is, [ſince the fall] it is the very deſign of the [Adamic] law, [the law of innocence given to ſinleſs Adam; yea, and of the Moſaic law, when it is conſidered as *written in ſtones*, and decorated with ſhadows or types of good things to come,] to bring men to believe in Chriſt for juſtification and ſalvation; as he alone gives that pardon and life, which the law [of innocence]

N. B. The parts of this diſcourſe, which are encloſed in brackets, [ ] are the additions that guard or ſtrengthen the old ſermon which my opponent calls for; and the parts contained between the two hands, ☞ ☜ are the paſſages, which he has extracted from it, and publiſhed at the end of his Finiſhing Stroke.

ſhews

fhews the want of, [and which the Mofaic law, abftracted from gofpel-promifes, points unto,] but cannot poffibly beftow.

The Apoftle refuming the fame fubject in the chapter out of which the text is taken, comforts himfelf by confidering, that altho' Ifrael in general was blinded, yet all were not loft. Old Simeon and Anna had feen the Salvation of God, and had departed in peace. Nicodemus, a doctor in Ifrael, had received the doctrine of the new birth and falvation by faith. Three thoufand Jews had been pricked to the heart by penitential forrow, and filled with peace and joy by believing in Jefus Chrift. And even at this prefent time, fays the Apoftle, there is a remnant according to the election of grace: That is, There are fome, who, [like Nathaniel and Nicodemus] caffing away their dependance on their own righteoufnefs, are numbered among the elect, according to that gracious decree of God, "He that believeth fhall be faved," &c. Mark xvi. 16.

From thence the Apoftle takes occafion to fhew, that pardon and falvation are not, in whole or in part, attained by [the covenant of] works, but merely by [the covenant of] grace. *A remnant* of thofe felf-righteous Pharifees *is faved*, [not indeed by their felf-righteoufnefs,] but by the covenant of grace, [according to which we muft equally part with our felf-righteoufnefs and our fins.] *And if by* [the covenant of] *grace*, then *it is no more* [by that] *of works*, whether of the ceremonial law [of Mofes,] or of the moral law [of innocence perverted to Pharifaic purpofes;] *elfe* [the] *grace* [of Chrift] *is no longer grace* [beftowed upon a criminal:] The very nature of [† gofpel-] grace is loft. *And if it be* [by the covenant] *of works*,

† I fay *gofpel-grace*, becaufe it is that which the Apoftle means. It may with propriety be diftinguifhed from the *original grace* which Adam had before the fall, and which Deifts and Pharifees ftill fuppofe themfelves poffeffed of. Some people imagine that if our firft parents had well acquitted themfelves in the trial of their faithfulnefs, their reward would *not* have been *of grace*; they would (ftrictly fpeaking) have *merited* heaven. But this is a mif-

take.

works, then it is no more [by goſpel-] *grace; elſe work is no longer* [the] *work* [of a ſinleſs creature,] but the very nature of it is deſtroyed [according to the firſt covenant, which requires perfect conformity to the law in the work, and perfect innocence in the worker.]

Having thus opened the context, I proceed to a more particular illuſtration of the text; and that I may explain it as fully, as the time allotted for this diſcourſe will permit,

FIRST, I ſhall premiſe an account of the two covenants: The covenant of *works*, to which the Phariſees of old truſted, and [moſt of] the Roman Catholics, with too many falſe Proteſtants, ſtill truſt, in our days:—And the covenant of *grace*, by which alone a remnant was ſaved in St. Paul's time, and will be ſaved in all ages.

SECONDLY, I ſhall prove, that the way of ſalvation *by faith only*, or, which is the ſame thing, *by the covenant of grace*, is the *only way* that leads to life, according to the ſcriptures and the articles of our church, to whoſe holy doctrine I ſhall publicly ſet my ſeal.

THIRDLY,

take. From the Creator to the creature, all bleſſings are, and muſt for ever be *of grace*, of *mere* grace. Gabriel himſelf enjoys heaven through *free grace*. Unleſs ſome gracious promiſe interpoſes, God may this inſtant put an end without injuſtice, not only to his glory, but to his very exiſtence. Should you aſk what difference there is, between *original* and *goſpel* grace; I anſwer, that original, *Adamic grace*, flowed from God, as *Creator* and *Preſerver*, to *innocent, happy* creatures. But *goſpel grace*, that for which St. Paul ſo ſtrenuouſly contends in my text, flows from God, as Redeemer and Comforter, to guilty, wretched mankind: And here let us take notice of the oppoſition there is, between Phariſaic and Evangelical obedience, between the works of the law and the works of faith. The former are done with a proud conceit of the natural ſtrength, which man loſt by the fall; and the latter, with an humble dependance on divine mercy through the Redeemer's merits; and on the ſupernatural power beſtowed upon loſt mankind for his ſake. When St. Paul decries the works of the law, it is merely to recommend the works of faith: and yet, O the dreadful effects of confuſion! Many ſuppoſe, that he pours equal contempt upon both.

THIRDLY, I shall endeavour to shew the unreasonableness and injustice of those, who accuse me of "preaching against good works," when I preach salvation thro' the covenant of grace only.

FOURTHLY and lastly, after having informed you, why [even] good works cannot deserve salvation in whole or in part, I shall answer the old objection, "If good works cannot [† properly merit us heaven,] "why should we do them? There is no need to "trouble ourselves about any."

FIRST

† The following propositions, contain the sum of our doctrine concerning merit,—(1) All *proper* worthiness, merit, or desert of any divine reward, is in Christ, the overflowing fountain of all original excellence.—(2) If any of the living water of that rich spring is received by faith, and flows through the believer's heart and works, it forms *improper* worthiness, or *derived* merit; because, *properly* speaking, it is Christ's merit still.—(3) *Original* merit answers to the *first* gospel axiom, and *derived* worthiness to the *second*.—(4) According to the first covenant we can never merit a reward, because, of ourselves as sinners, we deserve nothing but hell.—But (5) according to the second covenant, by God's gracious appointment and merciful promise, we can, *improperly speaking*, be worthy of heaven, through the blood of Christ sprinkled upon our hearts, and through his righteousness derived to us and to our works by faith.—(6) Hence it is, that God will give some, namely impenitent murderers, blood to drink, *for they are worthy*, they *properly* deserve it; while others, namely, penitent believers, shall walk with Christ in white, *for they are worthy*, they *improperly* merit it. Rev. xvi. 6. and iii. 4.

An illustration taken from a leaden pipe of water may shew how it is possible, that *unworthy* man should become *worthy*, thro' the righteousness which Christ supplies believers with. Strictly speaking, water does not belong to a pipe, any more than merit or worthiness to a believer: for a pipe is only a number of *dry* sheets of lead folded together: But if that *dry*, leaden pipe really receives some of the water, which a river supplies; I make myself ridiculous by asserting, that the man who hints, there is water in the pipe, confounds the elements, seeks to dry up the river, and is guilty of a dreadful philosophical heresy.

The word *Merit* is absolutely nothing to Mr. Wesley and me; but the doctrine of faithful obedience in Christ, and of the gracious rewards with which it shall be crowned for his sake, contains all our duty on earth, and draws after it all our bliss in heaven. Therefore, only grant us *truly* the second gospel-axiom:—grant

First Part.

I begin by laying before you an account of the two covenants, that God entered into with man. The first was made with Adam, when he was in a state of innocence in paradise. The condition of it, which is impossible to fallen man, was easy before the fall. It runs thus: "Do this and live: The man that does these things, shall live by them," Rom. x. 5. That is, "if thou [who art now a guiltless, holy and perfect creature] yieldest a constant, universal, and perfect obedience to the moral law," now summed up in the ten commandments, "thou shalt be rewarded with glory and heaven. But if thou failest in any one particular, whether it be in thought, word, or deed, thou shalt surely die," Gen. ii. 17, for "cursed is every one, that continueth not in ALL things, written in the book of the law to do them," Gal. iii. 10.

Nor does this covenant make any allowance for deficiencies, or pass by one transgression great or little, without pronouncing the threatened curse; "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all," James ii. 10. That is, All the curses denounced against those, who break the covenant of works, hang upon his guilty head.

This first covenant we have all broken in our first parents, for [*in Adam all die*]—"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," Rom. v. 12. We are then all born [or *conceived*] *in sin*; Psalm li. 5; and consequently *we are by nature children*

us, that God has not appointed his creatures to endless *punishments* and heavenly *rewards* out of mere caprice:—grant us, that, while the wicked shall *properly deserve* their *own* (and not Adam's) place in hell, the righteous shall *improperly be worthy to obtain that world*, where they *shall be equal to the angels*, Luke xx. 35:—grant us that man is in a state of probation, and shall be recompensed *for*, and *according to what he has done in the body, whether it be good or bad*:—In a word, grant us the capital doctrine of a day of retribution, in which *God shall judge the world in* wisdom and *righteousness*, not in solemn folly or satanical hypocrisy; and we ask no more.—This note is a key to *all* the doctrines, which we maintain in the Minutes, and explain in the checks.

dren of wrath, Eph. ii. 3. But this is not all: this root of original sin, produces in every man many actual iniquities, whereby, as we imitate Adam's rebellion, so we make the guilt of it our own, and fasten the curse attending that guilt upon our souls, Rom. vii. 24.

Therefore, while we remain in our natural state, [or, to speak more intelligibly, while we continue in sin, guilt, and *total* impenitency; we not only trample the covenant of grace under foot, but] we stand upon the covenant of works; and consequently lie under the dreadful curse, which is already denounced against every transgressor of the law, Gal. 3. 10.

Hence it is that, *by the deeds of the law*, i. e. by the good works commanded in the law [of innocence] or by the ceremonies prescribed in the law of Moses; *shall no flesh living be justified: for as many as are of the works of the law*, [as it stands opposed to the gospel; yea, as many also as rest, like the impenitent Pharisees, in the letter of the Mosaic law,] *are under the curse, the scripture having concluded all under sin*, and consequently under the curse, *that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God*, [and gladly accept his offers of mercy] Rom. iii. 19, 20.

In this deplorable state of guilt and danger, we remain careless and insensible, ☞ making what we call "*the mercy of God*," a pack-horse [if I may use so coarse an expression] to carry us and our sins to heaven, upon the *filthy rags* of our own [pharisaic] righteousness. ☜ Here we continue, till divine grace awakens us, by the preaching of the gospel, or by some other means. Eph. v. 14. Being then roused to a serious consideration of our fallen state in Adam, and to a sensibility of the curse which we lie under, through our numerous breaches of the [second, as well as of] the first covenant; after many fruitless attempts to remove that curse, by fulfilling the law [of innocence;] after many endeavours to save ourselves by our own works, and righteousness, ☞ we despair at last of getting to heaven, by building a

Babel

Babel with the *untempered mortar* of our own [fancied] sincerity, and the bricks of our wretched good works, [or rather of our splendid sins.] And leaving the impassable road of the covenant of works, we begin to seek the way, which God's free mercy has opened for *lost* sinners in Jesus Christ. Acts ii. 37. Phil. iii. 6, &c.

This *new and living way*, is the new covenant, the covenant of grace [in its various editions or dispensations. For, if the Christian edition is called *new* in opposition to the Jewish, all the editions together may well be] called *new*, in opposition to the old covenant. It is also termed *gospel*, that is, *glad tidings*, because [† with different degrees of evidence] it brings

† This, and the preceding clauses are added, to guard the doctrine of the gospel-dispensations, of which I had but very confused views eleven years ago. See third Check, p. 10, &c. Leaning *then* too much towards Calvinism. I fancied, at times at least, that the Gospel was confined within the narrow channel of its last dispensation; which was as absurd as if I had conceited, that the swell of our rivers at high water, is all the ocean. But returning to my Bible, and "reviewing the whole affair," I clearly see, that the Jewish and Christian gospel are not *the everlasting gospel*, but only two of its brightest dispensations. Should the reader ask me what I mean by *the everlasting gospel*, when I consider it in its full latitude: I answer, that I mean with St. Paul, "The riches of God's goodness, forbearance, and long-suffering, leading men to repentance" for Christ's sake, who in all ages is the Saviour of the world.—Yea, and the severe strokes of his gracious providence driving them to it. I dare not insinuate, that Jonah, one of the most successful preachers in the world, was not a *gospel-preacher*, when he stirred up all the people of Nineveh to repentance, by the fear of impending destruction: and that St. *John the divine*, was a stranger to true divinity; when he gave us the following account of the manner, in which a celestial Evangelist preached the everlasting gospel. "I saw another angel having the *everlasting gospel* to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people [Here is free grace!] saying with a loud voice: Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment, (as well as of his mercy,) is come: and worship him that made heaven and earth and the sea, and the fountains of waters."—Here is, if I am not mistaken, the gospel according to which *many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down* at the heavenly feast with the Father of the faithful, when the unloving Pharisees *shall be thrust out*, notwith-

brings comfortable news of free salvation in Christ, to all that see they are undone in themselves.

☞ The second covenant then, or the gospel, is a dispensation of free grace and mercy to poor, lost, helpless sinners, who, seeing and feeling themselves condemned by the law [of innocence,] and utterly unable to obtain justification upon the terms of the FIRST covenant, come to Jesus Christ [*the light of men*, according to the dispensation, which they are under,] to seek in him that righteousness, which they have not in themselves. For the Son of God, being both God and man in one person; and by the invaluable sacrifice of himself upon the cross, having suffered the punishment due to all our breaches of the law, and by his most holy life having answered all the demands of the FIRST covenant, "God can be just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus," Rom. iii. 26. ☞ Therefore, if a sinner, *whose mouth is stopped*, and who *has nothing to pay*, pleads from the heart the atoning blood of Christ [and supposing he never heard that precious name, if according to his light he implores *divine mercy*, for the *free* exercise of which, Christ's blood has made way] not only God will not *deliver him to the tormentors*, but will *frankly forgive him all*. Luke vii. 41, &c.

☞ Herein then consists the great difference, between the first and the second covenant. Under the *first*, an absolute, unsinning, universal obedience in our own persons is required; and such obedience we,

notwithstanding their great ado about *absolute election*. This note will probably touch the apple of my reader's eye, if he is a rigid Predestinarian. But if he is offended, I intreat him to consider, whether his love does not bear some resemblance to the charity of those strong Predestinarians of old, those monopolizers of God's election, who despised poor *sinners of the Gentiles*. How violent was their prejudice! They vastly admired our Lord's sermon at Nazareth, till he touched the sore that festered in their strait-laced breast. But no sooner did he insinuate, that their election was not yet made sure, and that the poor Pagan widow of Sarepta, and Naaman the Syrian, were not absolute reprobates; then "they were filled with wrath and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill that they might cast him down headlong."

[in our fallen ſtate,] can never perform.—Under the ſecond covenant, this obedience [to the law of innocence, paid by, and] in our ſurety Chriſt Jeſus, when we are united to him by a faith of the operation of God, is accepted inſtead of our own. ☞ For as our ſins were transferred upon the Redeemer's guiltleſs head, ſo his merits are brought home to our guilty ſouls, by the powerful operation of divine grace, thro' faith, and being thus *complete in Chriſt* † [with regard to the fulfilling of the FIRST covenant,] we can rejoice in God, who has made him unto us wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption. [I ſay, with regard to the fulfilling of the FIRST covenant, to guard againſt the error of thouſands, who vainly imagine that Chriſt has fulfilled the terms of the *ſecond* covenant for us, and talk of *finiſhed ſalvation*, juſt as if our Lord had actually repented of our ſins, believed in his own blood, and fulfilled his own evangelical law in our ſtead; a fatal error this, which makes Chriſtians lawleſs, repreſents Chriſt as the miniſter of ſin, and arms the Antinomian fiend with a dreadful ax, to fell the trees of righteouſneſs, and cut down the very pillars of the houſe of God.]

From what has been obſerved it follows, that before any one can believe, in the goſpel-ſenſe of the word, he muſt be *convinced of ſin* by the Spirit of God, John xvi. 8. He muſt feel himſelf a guilty, loſt, and

† If I ſay that *penitent* believers are *compleat* in Chriſt with reſpect to the *firſt* covenant; I do not intimate that *fallen* believers who *crucify the Son of God afreſh*, may even commit deliberate murder, and remain *complete in him*, or rather (as the original means) *filled with him*. Far be the horrid inſinuation from the heart of a Chriſtian. I readily grant, that true believers are not leſs dead to the Adamic law of innocence, than to the ceremonial law of Moſes; and that with reſpect to it, they heartily ſay as David, "Enter not into judgment, with thy ſervants, O Lord, for in thy ſight ſhall no man living be juſtified." But miſtake me not, I would not inſinuate, that they are *lawleſs*, or only under a *rule of life*, which they may break without endangering their ſalvation. No; they *are under the law of Chriſt, the law of liberty, the law of the ſpirit of life, the royal law* of goſpel holineſs; and according to this law, they ſhall all be rewarded or puniſhed in the day of judgment.

and helpleſs ſinner, unable to recover the favour and image of God by his own ſtrength and righteouſneſs: Acts ii. 37, 38.

This conviction and ſenſe of guilt make the ſinner *come weary and heavy laden to Chriſt*, earneſtly claiming the *reſt* which he offers to weary ſouls, Matt. xi. 28. This reſt the mourner ſeeks, with the contrite Publican, in the conſtant uſe of all the means of grace; endeavouring to bring forth fruit meet for repentance, till the ſame ſpirit that had convinced him of ſin, and alarmed his drowſy conſcience, convinces him alſo of righteouſneſs, John xvi. 8. i. e. ſhews him the all-ſufficiency of the Saviour's righteouſneſs, to ſwallow up his unrighteouſneſs; and the infinite value of Chriſt's meritorious death, to atone for his unholy life; enabling him to believe with the *heart*, and conſequently to *feel* [under the Chriſtian diſpenſation] that he has an intereſt in the Redeemer's blood and righteouſneſs; [or, that he is ſavingly intereſted in the merit of all that the Son of God ſuffered, did, and continues to do for us.

This lively faith, this "faith working by love, is that which is imputed for righteouſneſs," Rom. iv. 3. and that whereby a ſoul is born of God [according to the † Chriſtian diſpenſation of the goſpel.] 1 John v. 1.

By

† The judicious reader will eaſily perceive, that the additions made to this, and ſome other paragraphs of my old ſermon, are intended to guard the inferior diſpenſations of the goſpel. Are there not degrees of ſaving faith, inferior to the faith of the Chriſtian goſpel? And are not thoſe degrees of faith conſiſtent with the moſt profound ignorance of the hiſtory of our Lord's ſufferings, and conſequently with any *explicit* knowledge of the atonement? Although mankind in general had ſome conſciouſneſs of guilt, and a confuſed idea of propitiatory ſacrifices; and although all the Jewiſh ſacrifices and prophecies pointed to the great atonement; yet how few, even among the pious Jews had a clear belief that the Meſſiah would *put away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf!* How unreaſonable is it then to confine the goſpel to the explicit knowledge of Chriſt's atoning ſufferings to which both the prophets and apoſtles were once ſuch ſtrangers! Does not St. Peter intimate that *the prophets ſearched*, to little purpoſe, *what the Spirit ſignified, when it teſtified beforehand the ſufferings of Chriſt*; ſince *it was revealed*

By this faith the believer being [strongly] united to Christ, as a member to the body, becomes entitled to [a much larger share in] the benefit of all that our Lord did and suffered; and in consequence of this vital union with him, who is the source of all goodness,

revealed to them, that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things, which are now reported in the Christian gospel? 1 Peter i. 11, 12. And how absurd is it to suppose, that nothing is gospel, but a doctrine, which the first preachers of the Christian gospel knew little or nothing of, even while they preached the gospel under our Lord's immediate direction? Did not John the Baptist exceed in evangelical knowledge, *all that were born of woman?* Were the Apostles much inferior to him, when they had been three years in Christ's school? Did not our Lord say to them, "Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for verily many prophets and righteous men have desired to see the things that ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things that ye hear, and have not heard them?" Again, did he not testify, that in general they had justifying faith, i. e. faith working by love? Did he not say. "Now are ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."—"The Father himself loveth you, because you have loved me, and believed that I came forth from God?" Nay, did he not send them two and two, to preach the gospel of the day: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand: Repent and believe *the gospel?*" And would he have sent them to preach *a gospel* to which they were utter strangers? But were they not perfectly strangers to what passes now for the *only* gospel? Had they the least idea that their Master's blood was to be shed for them, even after he had said, "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins?" When he spoke to them of his sufferings, were not they so far from believing in the atonement which he was about to make, that they were offended at the very idea? Is not this evident, from the words of Peter, their chief speaker, who *began to rebuke him, saying*, "Be it far from thee, Lord: This shall not happen unto thee: i. e. We do not yet see the end of thy blood: Nay, when Christ had actually shed it, and the *atoning* work was *finished*; far from having the least notion about what is called "finished salvation," and "gospel" in our day; did they not suppose that all their hopes were blasted, saying, "We trusted that it had been he, who should have redeemed Israel," Luke xxiv. 21? From these observations may I not conclude; (1) That an explicit knowledge of Christ's passion and atonement, is the prerogative of the *Christian* gospel? And (2) that those who make it essential to the *everlasting* gospel, doom to hell, not only all the righteous Jews, Turks, and Heathens, who may now be alive; but also almost all the believers, who died before our Lord's crucifixion, and some of the disciples themselves after his resurrection?

neſs, he derives a [degree of] power till then unknown, to do good works truly ſo called.

[O thou, that profeſſeſt the Chriſtian faith,] *ſhew me thy faith by thy works:* ſhew me that thou art grafted in Chriſt [according to the Chriſtian diſpenſation] by ſerving God with all thy ſtrength; by doing all the good thou canſt to the ſouls and bodies of men with chearfulneſs; by ſuffering wrong and contempt with meekneſs; by ſlighting earthly joys, mortifying fleſhly luſts, having thy converſation in heaven, and panting every hour after a cloſer union with Chriſt, the life of all believers. If thou doſt not bring forth theſe fruits, thou art not a Chriſtian; thou art not *in Chriſt, a new creature*, 2 Cor. v. 17. Thou mayeſt talk of faith, and ſuppoſe that thou believeſt; but give me leave to tell thee, that if thou believeſt at all, it is with the drunkard's faith, the whoremonger's faith, the devil's faith, James ii. 19. — From ſuch a faith, may God deliver us, and give us, inſtead of this counterfeit, "the faith once delivered unto the ſaints, the myſtery of faith kept in a pure conſcience!" Get it, O ſinner, who beareſt a Chriſtian name, and Chriſt and heaven are thine: [but if thou] die without it, [whether it be by continuing in thy preſent ſin and unbelief, or by making ſhipwreck of the faith,] thou dieſt the ſecond death; thou ſinkeſt in the bottomleſs pit for evermore. Mark xvi. 16.

Having thus given you an account of both covenants, and laid before you the *conditions* of each; namely, the *firſt*, a ſinleſs, uninterrupted obedience to all the commands of the holy, ſpiritual law of God, performed by ourſelves [without the leaſt mediatorial aſſiſtance:] and for the *ſecond*, a lively faith in Chriſt [*the light of the world*, according to the goſpel-diſpenſation we are under;] by which faith the virtue of Chriſt's active and paſſive obedience to the law [of innocence] being imputed to us, and applied to our hearts, we are made new creatures, born again, and created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, without which there can be no lively faith [under any of the divine diſpenſations:] and having [by that important

diſtinction

diftinction of the two grand covenants] removed a great deal of rubbifh out of the way; I hope it will not be difficult to prove, under the

SECOND HEAD,

That the way of falvation by fuch a lively faith only, or, which is the fame, by the covenant of grace, is the one way that leads to life, according to the Bible and our articles of religion.

If you afk all the Pharifees, all the felf-righteous Heathens, Turks, Jews, and Papifts in the world, which is the way of falvation? They will anfwer, "Through doing good works, and leading a good life:" that is, "Through the covenant of works;" flatly contrary to what I have proved in the firft part of this difcourfe; namely, that by the works of the law, by the firft covenant, fhall no flefh living be juftified, Gal. ii. 16. Or if they have yet fome fenfe of modefty, if they are not quite loft in pride, they will varnifh over their ignorance with two or three words about God's mercy. "Why, fay they, it is to be "hoped, we fhall all be faved by endeavouring to "lead good lives, and do good works: and if that "will not do, God's mercy in Chrift will do the "reft." Which means neither more nor lefs than this: "We are ftill to be faved by the covenant of "works, by putting on the robe of our own [Chrift-"lefs] righteoufnefs; and if it happen to be too "fhort, or to have fome holes, Chrift will in mercy "tear his fpotlefs robe [of merits,] to patch up and "lengthen ours." [And this they fay, without the leaft degree of *genuine* repentance towards God, and *heart-felt* faith in our Lord Jefus Chrift.] O how many dream of getting to heaven in this fool's coat! How many, by thus blending the two covenants, which are as incompatible as fire and water, try to make for themfelves a third covenant, that never exifted but in their proud imagination! In a word, how many are there, who fay or think: We muft be faved partly by [the covenant of] works, and partly by [the covenant of] grace! Giving the lie to God

and

and my text! Overturning at once the gospel and Proteſtantiſm!—No, no: if *a remnant is ſaved*, it is by the covenant of grace; and if by grace, then it is no more [by the covenant] of works; otherwiſe grace is no more grace. But if it be [by the covenant] of works, then it is no more grace; otherwiſe work is no more work: [for the moment obedience is *the work of faith*, it can no more be oppoſed to faith and goſpel-grace, than the fruit of a tree can be oppoſed to the tree, and the ſap by which it is produced.]

But, *to the law and the teſtimony!* Do the oracles of God, or the writings of our Reformers, direct us for ſalvation to the covenant of works, or to a third covenant of works and grace patched up together? Do they not entirely and invariably point us to the covenant of grace alone?

Hear firſt the word of the Lord. "He that *believeth* on the Son" [according to the light of the diſpenſation he is under] "hath everlaſting life: he that *believeth not*, ſhall not ſee life, but the wrath of God abideth on him," John iii. 36.—When the trembling jailer cries out, "What muſt I do to be ſaved?" Paul and Silas anſwer, "*believe* in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved," Acts xvi. 31.—"God ſo loved the world, ſays St. John, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever *believeth* in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life." John iii. 16.—"By *grace*, ſays St. Paul, ye are ſaved, through *faith*, and that not of yourſelves, it is the gift of God; not [by the covenant] of works, [nor yet by the proper merit of any works,] leſt any man ſhould boaſt." "For to him that worketh [without applying to the throne of grace, as an hell-deſerving ſinner] is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt: but to him that worketh not [upon the footing of the firſt covenant;] but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly; his *faith* is counted for righteouſneſs:" he is ſaved by *Faith* which is the *Condition* of the covenant of grace, Rom. iv. 4.

Thus ſpeak the ſcriptures, and, bleſſed be God! Thus ſpeak alſo our liturgy and articles.

In

In the *abſolution* the prieſt declares, that [in the day of converſion] *God pardoneth and abſolveth*, that is, ſaveth, ☞ not thoſe who [being aſhamed to repent, and ſcorning to believe the goſpel, endeavour to] lead a good life to get a pardon [by their own merits:] ☜ but *all thoſe, who truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy goſpel*; that is, all thoſe, who, by *true repentance* renounce all dependance upon the covenant of works; and by a *faith unfeigned* fly for refuge only to [God's mercy in] the covenant of grace. Hence it is that in the communion-ſervice, we are commanded to pray, That, "by the merits and death of Chriſt, and through faith in his blood, we and all the whole church, may obtain remiſſion of ſins, and all other benefits of his paſſion."

This holy doctrine is moſt clearly maintained, and ſtrongly eſtabliſhed in the ixth, xth, xith, xiith, and xiiith Articles of our Religion. And upon theſe five pillars, it will remain unſhaken, as long as the church of England ſhall ſtand.

☞ Having thus ſhewn you, how ſelf-righteous, unawakened ſinners dream of ſalvation, either by the covenant of works, or by a third imaginary covenant, in which two incompatible things [phariſaical] works and [evangelical] grace, merits and mercy are jumbled together; and having proved, that ſalvation cannot be attained, but under the ſecond covenant, that is, *by faith only*, and not by [the covenant of] works; I beg leave to recapitulate the whole in three articles, which contain the ſum of the goſpel, and of the doctrine that I have conſtantly preached among you, and am determined to preach, God being my helper, till my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.

Upon the proofs before advanced, I ſolemnly declare: 1. That there is no ſalvation to be attained by [the covenant of] works ſince the fall. The beſt man having broken an hundred times the firſt covenant, deſerves an hundred times damnation by his works, and can no more be ſaved from hell by his obedience to God's law [of innocence] than a thief can be ſaved

from

from the gallows, by the civil law which condemns him to be hanged.

2. [Respecting the primary and properly meritorious cause of our salvation, from first to last] "we are saved, as it written in our eleventh article, only for the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our works or deservings: and, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort:" yea the only doctrine that can melt down the heart of sinners, and make them constantly zealous of all sorts of good works, [if it is not made to supersede the justification of believers by the evidence of works, both in the day of trial and in the day of judgment,]

3. As all mankind are condemned by the covenant of works, *he that believeth not* [in the light of his dispensation] *being condemned already:* ☞ and as by the covenant of grace, there is no salvation to be had but in Christ through faith: so there is no mixing those two covenants without renouncing Christ and his gospel. He that stands with one foot upon the covenant of works, and with the other foot upon the covenant of grace; [he that talks of divine mercy, while his heart continues as regardless of it as if he were sinless;] is in the most imminent danger of eternal ruin. ☜ He that says, "I will do first what I can to "merit heaven, I will do my best: and Christ, I "hope, will do the rest: and God, I trust, will have "mercy upon me," is yet without God, and without Christ in the world: he knows neither the nature of God's law, nor that of Christ's gospel.

[This is, my dear hearers, the substance of the *three articles*, which eleven years ago I publicly laid down in this church, as the ground of the doctrine which I had preached, and was determined still to preach among you. And I solemnly declare, that, to this day, I have not seen the least cause to *reject* any one of them as erroneous; though I must confess, that I have found abundant reason particularly to *guard* the second, against the daring attacks, that Antino-

mians in principle, or in practice, make upon St. James's undefiled religion. To return.]

We are undoubtedly obliged to do what we can, and to ufe the means of grace at all times and in all places; but to reft in thofe means, to fuppofe that they will fave us, and upon this fuppofition, to be eafy without the experience of [converting] grace in our hearts, is very abfurd. It is a miftake as fooliſh as that of the man, who fuppofes that his garden will be the more fruitful for pipes, which convey no water; or that his body can be refreſhed by empty cups.

The language of a penitent finner is, "Lord, I pray, and hear, I faft, and receive, I give alms, and keep the fabbath; but after all, I am an unprofitable fervant. — [I muft work out my own falvation with fear and trembling, and yet] without thee I can do nothing: I cannot change my heart; I cannot root up from my breaft the defire of praife, the thirft of pleafure, and the hankering after gold, vanity, beauty, or fenfual gratifications which I continually feel: — [Without thee] I cannot force my ftubborn heart to repent, believe, and love; to be meek and lowly, calm and devout. Lord deliver me from this body of death; Lord, fave or I periſh."

Chriſt will have all the glory or none. We muſt be wholly faved by him, or loſt for ever: [for altho' we muſt be *co-workers with him*, by walking religiouſly in good works; and if we are not, we ſhall have our portion with the *workers of iniquity*; yet it is *he* that *worketh in us*, as in moral agents, *both to will and to do of his good pleaſure*. It is he that appoints, and bleſſes all the inferior means of our ſalvation, therefore all the glory properly belongs to him alone.]

[All our pardons flow down to us, in the ſtreams of his precious blood. All our life, light, and power, are nothing but emanations from him, who is the Fountain of Life, the Sun of Righteouſneſs, the Wiſdom and Power of God, and in a word, Jehovah, our Righteouſneſs. All *gracious rewardableneſs* of the

the works of faith, all that *aptitude* of our ſprinkled obedience unto eternal life, all that *being worthy*, which he himſelf condeſcends to ſpeak of Rev. iii. 4, and Luke xx. 35, ſpring not only from his gracious appointment, but from his overflowing merits. A compariſon will illuſtrate my meaning.]

[You ſee the chearful light that flows in upon us through thoſe windows, and renders the glaſs as bright as the ſpring day. You know, that this brightneſs *in* the glaſs is not *from* the glaſs, which was totally dark ſome hours ago; a fit emblem THEN *of the works of darkneſs*, the works of unbelief: ſuch works being as much devoid of rewardableneſs, as thoſe panes were of light at midnight. Let us not forget then, that if our works are graciouſly rewarded, it is only when they are the works of *faith*, whoſe peculiar property is *freely* to admit the merits of Chriſt, and the beams of the Sun of Righteouſneſs; juſt as it is the property of the tranſparent matter, which compoſes thoſe windows, *neceſſarily* to admit the genial warmth and chearful rays of the natural ſun.]

[You have ſeen a glaſs perfectly reflecting the beauty of a perſon placed over againſt it. You have admired the elegant proportion of features, which compoſed her beauty; but did you ever ſee any man ſo void of ſenſe, as to ſuppoſe, that the beauty was *originally* in the glaſs which reflected it; or that the lovely appearance exiſted without depending on its original; or that it robbed the living beauty of her peculiar glory? And ſhall any, on the one hand, be ſo full of voluntary humility, as to maintain, that Chriſt is diſhonoured by the *derived worthineſs* of the works of *faith*, whoſe office it is to receive, embrace, and truſt in the Redeemer's *original* and *proper* merit? Shall any, on the other hand, be ſo full of Phariſaic pride as to fancy, that the diſtinguiſhed excellence of our good works, if we have any, ſprings from, or terminates in ourſelves? No, my brethren: As rivers flow back to the ſea, and loſe themſelves in that immenſe reſervoir of waters, whence they had their

origin; ſo let all the "rewardable *condecency*" † of our evangelical obedience flow back to, and loſe itſelf in the boundleſs, and bottomleſs ocean of our Lord's *original* and *proper* merits.]

[He, He alone is worthy,—*properly* worthy! Worthy,—ſupremely *worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain!* Let us then always ſay, with the humble men of old, *Our goods are nothing unto thee*, our good works cannot poſſibly benefit thee. What have we, great God, that we have not received from thy gracious hand? And ſhall we keep back part of thy inconteſtable property, and impiouſly wear thy robes of praiſe! Far be the ſpiritual ſacrilege from every pious breaſt! As thine is all the kingdom and power; ſo thine be all the glory for ever and ever!]

[Keep we then at an awful diſtance from the gulph, which ſelf-righteous Phariſees ſet between themſelves, and the juſtifier of thoſe, who like the contrite publican, are ſenſible of their ungodlineſs. With indignation riſe we againſt the deluſion of the Romaniſts, who countenance the abſurd and impious doctrine of Indulgences, by the worſe than Phariſaic doctrine of their works of Supererogation. Let us not only receive, and defend in a ſcriptural manner, the important articles of our Church, but with undaunted courage before men, and with penitential contrition before God, let us ſtand to our xivth article, which teaches us, after our Lord, to ſay before the Throne of inflexible juſtice, "We are unprofitable ſervants, even when we have done all that is commanded us." In point of *ſtrict equivalence*, OUR beſt works of faith, our holieſt duties, cannot merit the leaſt reward. But, O! may the humbling truth, keep us for ever in the duſt! in point of *ſtrict juſtice* our every bad work *properly* deſerves infernal torments.]

† I need not inform my *judicious* readers, that I uſe the uncouth, barbarous expreſſion of Dr. Owen, "rewardable *condecency*," to convey the meaning of our Lord, when he graciouſly ſpeaks of *our meriting* or *being worthy*. If ſick perſons will not take a draught but out of a certain cup, made in the height of a queer faſhion, we muſt pleaſe them for their good.

[Through

[Through that dear Redeemer then, we receive all the favours, which the Father of mercies beſtows upon us. Are our hearts ſoftened? It is through the influence of his preventing grace. Are our ſins blotted out? It is through the ſprinkling of his atoning blood. Are our ſouls renewed? It is by the communication of his powerful righteouſneſs. Are we numbered among God's adopted children, and made partakers of his loving ſpirit? It is through a faith that receives him as the light of the world, and the life of men.

[The very graces, which the Spirit works in us; and the fruits of holineſs, which thoſe graces produce in our hearts and lives, are accepted only for Chriſt's ſake. It is he, who preſents them to God, ſprinkled with his precious blood, and perfumed with his meritorious interceſſion. Nor are the defects of our holieſt things, any other way atoned for, than by the full, perfect, and ſufficient ſacrifice, oblation, and ſatisfaction, which he made upon the croſs for the ſins of the whole world.]

[For Chriſt's ſake, God has annexed certain rewards of grace and glory, to the works of faith, which Chriſt's ſpirit excites us to; and, I repeat it, for the ſake of Chriſt only, we receive the rewards promiſed to humble, evangelical obedience. All Chriſtian believers ſay, "Not we, but the grace of God in Chriſt." So far as their tempers and actions have been good, they cry out, "Thou haſt wrought all our works in us." They all ſhout, "Chriſt FOR us, and Chriſt IN us, the hope of glory." They all aſcribe "Salvation to the Lamb;" and while they caſt their crowns of righteouſneſs and glory at his feet, they join in the grand chorus of the Church: "To him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and prieſts unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever." Thus, all is Chriſt; nothing without, nothing beſides him. In a word, he is to believers, as the Apoſtle juſtly call him, ALL IN ALL.]

[Indeed, in maintaining the doctrine of *free grace*, I cannot but go even farther than our mistaken brethren, who suppose themselves the only advocates for it. They must forgive me, if I cannot be of their sentiment, when they insinuate, that they shall *absolutely* and *necessarily* be saved. For as reason dictates, that *absolute necessity* vanishes before *free grace*; so Christ charges his dearest elect to *fear God*, as a righteous judge, who CAN *cast body and soul into hell*; yea, who can do it *justly*. No gracious promise therefore is made them, whose fulfilment in heaven as well as upon earth, is not all of Grace, as well as of Truth, and all through the merits of Christ.]

[O ye *precious merits* of my Saviour, and thou *free grace* of my God! I, for one, shall want you, as long as the sun or moon endureth. Nay, when those luminaries shall cease to shine, I shall wrap myself in you; my transported soul shall grasp you; my insatiate spirit shall plunge into your unfathomable depths; and while I run the never-ending circle of my blessed existence, my overflowing bliss shall spring from you; my grateful heart shall leap through your impulse, my exulting tongue shall shout your praise, and I shall strike my golden harp to your eternal honour.

☞ Wo then to those, who teach sinners the double way, the Pharisaic way of salvation, partly by man's merits [according to the first covenant,] and partly by the merits of Jesus Christ [according to the second.] "If we, or an angel from heaven, says St. Paul, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached, namely, that we are saved [i. e. pardoned, and sanctified] by grace, thro' faith, and that not of ourselves, [not without an atoning priest and the *Spirit helping our infirmities*] *not* [by the covenant] of works: it is the gift of God — let him be accursed," Gal. i. 8.] ☜

[☞ He really denies his Saviour, and tears the seamless robe of Christ's righteousness, who patches it with the rags of his own righteousness. [Or, to speak without metaphor, he denies our Lord's meri-

torious

torious fulfilling of the law of innocence, he despises the Saviour's compleat observance of the Adamic law of works, who being forgetful of his aggravated guilt, and regardless of his palpable impotence, refuses to submit to the law of faith, and to embrace the covenant of grace with an ardor becoming a poor, self-condemned, lost, and undone sinner. Nay, I go farther still:] he takes away the efficacy of Christ's atoning blood, who pretends to mend it by adding thereto the filthy drops of his own [Pharisaic] goodness, [in order to make a more complete satisfaction to divine justice.] ☞

To conclude: By the covenant of works man has all the glory of his own salvation. Faith is made of no effect; Christ is entirely set aside, and works are placed on the Mediator's throne.—According to the imaginary, mixt covenant of salvation by our own good works [so called] mended, with [some unscriptural notions and expressions about] Christ's merits; man has the FIRST share of the glory; Christ has only man's leavings. [The two covenants are confounded] works and faith [or rather, faithless works and faith, graceless works and grace,] contrary to my text, and indeed to common sense, come in together for a part of the honour [as if they were the primary meritorious cause of our salvation: whereas the good works of faith themselves are at best only the secondary, evidencing cause of our *final* salvation.

But by the gospel all is set in a most beautiful order, and exquisite harmony. The merits and sufferings of Christ, the Redeemer of the world, are the only "*meritorious cause*" of our salvation. The glory is entirely ascribed to him; and he alone sits upon the throne as a Saviour; while proud man has his mouth stopped, or opens it only in the dust to extol redeeming love. Faith, whose office it is continually to borrow the merits of Christ, and to receive the quickening power of his spirit: ☞ Faith, I say, is the only instrumental cause of our free salvation [in the day of conversion.] It receives Christ and salvation, as the hand of a beggar receives an alms. ☜ And as for

good

good works [properly fo called,] fo far are they from being left out of the gofpel-plan, that they have a MOST EMINENT place in it: ☞ They are the DECLARATIVE CAUSE of our free juftification both in the day of trial and in the day of judgment;] A conftant, uniform courfe of all forts of good works, with an holy and heavenly-minded converfation, being the only evidence of a lively and faving faith, [when it has time to fhew itfelf by external works.]

Thus Chrift alone *merits*, faith alone *apprehends*, and good works alone *evidence* falvation: Yea, they are the fruit of falvation [begun;] ☞ for [all works *meet for repentance* fpring from the free juftification and initial falvation, in which we are put in our infancy; and] the love of God fhed abroad in an [eftablifhed] believer's heart by the Holy Ghoft given unto him, is falvation itfelf; this love being the tree on which all good works grow, and making our gracious heaven below, as it will make our glorious heaven above.

THIRD PART.

I proceed to fhew the injuftice or unreafonablenefs of thofe, who accufe me of preaching againft good works. For, "*he exclaims againft good works — he runs down good works*," is an objection [which is ftill at times] urged againft my miniftry.

Although I confefs with forrow, that fome years ago, when I had more zeal than prudence, I dropped among you fome unguarded expreffions, and did not always clearly diftinguifh between the "good works," fo called, of unhumbled Pharifees; and the genuine obedience of penitent believers: yet I fhould wrong the truth, if I did not obferve, that, as Antinomians have always loathed the doctrine of a *believer's* juftification *by works*; fo the Pharifaical world has always abhorred the doctrine of a *finner's* juftification *by faith*. Hence it is that the above-mentioned afperfion, with abundance of falfe reports, have been in all ages the lot of thofe, who have preached the gofpel of Chrift,

that

that is, the glad news of free ſalvation through faith in his blood.

St. Paul had the ſame objection continually caſt in his face. "Do we then make void the law through faith?" ſays he in his own defence, Rom. iii. 31: That is, by preaching ſalvation *through faith* we do hinder people from doing the good works commanded in the law? "God forbid! yea we eſtabliſh the law;" i. e. Our preaching is ſo far from ſuperſeding good works, that it [inforces them by the greateſt variety of motives, and] puts our hearers into [the *beſt*, not to ſay] the *only* method of doing them: for it ſhews them how, being ſprinkled from an evil conſcience, and having their heart purified by faith, they ſhall naturally [i. e. ſpontaneouſly] produce all ſorts of good works, inſtead of bringing forth a few counterfeit ones.

The apoſtle anſwers the ſame objection, Rom. vi. 1. "Shall we then, who are ſaved by grace through faith, continue in ſin that grace may abound?" Shall we omit doing good works; ſhall we do evil works, becauſe ſalvation is not [by the covenant] of works, but [by that] of grace? "God forbid! How ſhall we, that are dead to ſin, live any longer therein!" As if he had ſaid, Is not the faith which we preach, a faith of the operation of God? Is it not a powerful and active principle, that turns the heart from all ſin to all righteouſneſs? Is it not a faith, by which we are made new creatures, and overcome the world? 1 John v. 1, 4.

[Suppoſe the lot of a miniſter acquainted with the privileges of the Chriſtian diſpenſation, is caſt in a place, where theſe Phariſaic deluſions generally prevail; the firſt thing he has to do, is undoubtedly to uncover and ſhake the falſe foundations, on which his unawakened hearers build their hope. He muſt ſhow them, that their partial, external, faithleſs obedience will never profit them. He muſt decry their imaginary good works, tear their filthy rags of fancied righteouſneſs, ſweep away their refuges of lies, and ſcourge their conſciences with the curſe of the law,

'till

'till they ſee their nakedneſs, feel their guilt, and receive the ſentence of death in themſelves: Then, and not till then, will they ſtand on a level with the poor contrite Publican, and

Groan the ſinner's only plea,
"God be merciful to me!"]

[When a preacher is engaged in that important and thankleſs buſineſs, how natural is it for him, eſpecially if he is yet young and unexperienced, to drop ſome unguarded expreſſions againſt good works; or at leaſt not to make always a proper diſtinction between the Phariſaical works of unbelief, which Iſaiah calls filthy rags, and the works of faith which our Lord calls good works? And how glad are his adverſaries, to have ſuch a plauſible pretence for throwing an odium upon him, by affirming that he explodes all ſorts of works, even thoſe for which our reward will be great in heaven!]

☞ The devil fought againſt our Reformers with ſuch weapons. All the books that the Papiſts wrote againſt them, rang with the charge of their turning good works out of Chriſtianity. ☜ Hear good Biſhop Latimer, one of the beſt livers that ever were: "You will ſay now, Here is all faith, faith; but we hear nothing of good works: for ſome carnal people make ſuch carnal objections like themſelves," &c. Sermon on twelfth day.

Thus St. Peter, St. Paul, and our Reformers, were accuſed of deſpiſing good works, becauſe they exalted Chriſt, [and with an holy indignation trampled upon the works of unbelief, which are the foundation of all Phariſaic hopes:] I rejoice to be counted worthy of ſuffering the ſame reproach, with ſuch a cloud of faithful witneſſes. Nevertheleſs as the ſcriptures ſay, that we muſt not let the good that is in us be evil ſpoken of, I ſhall advance ſome arguments, which, by God's bleſſing, will either convince or ſhame my accuſers.

You ſay, [you, that are ſet againſt the doctrine of Salvation by Faith:] "that I preach againſt good works—that I run down good works, &c." but pray, do

do you know what good works are? I am afraid you do not, or elſe you would not accuſe me ſo raſhly: give me leave therefore to inſtruct you in this point.

All divines agree, that good works are of three ſorts: 1. Works of *piety* towards God; 2. Works of *charity* towards our neighbour; and 3. Works of *ſelf-denial* towards ourſelves.

In the firſt claſs, which includes Works of Piety, divines rank public prayer in the church, family-prayer in private houſes, and [meditation or] private prayer in one's cloſet: ſinging pſalms, hymns, and ſpiritual ſongs: reading the Bible and other good books: hearing the word preached or expounded: receiving the ſacrament: keeping the ſabbath-day and feſtivals holy: confeſſing Chriſt before a wicked world: and ſuffering the loſs of one's eſtate, of one's good name, or life itſelf, for the goſpel's ſake.

Now I appeal to every impartial hearer, yea and to thy own conſcience, O man, who accuſeſt me of preaching againſt good works, whether I ever taught directly or indirectly, that we ought not conſtantly to attend public worſhip, as well as private worſhip in our own houſes, and to perform ſecret worſhip in our cloſet:—Whether I ever ſpoke againſt ſinging pſalms, hymns, and ſpiritual ſongs; or againſt reading the Bible and other good books:—Whether I ever ſo much as hinted, that we ought not to endeavour ſo to diſpatch our worldly buſineſs, as to hear [if poſſible] the word preached or expounded both on Sundays and working days:—Whether I ever *intimated*, that we can live in the neglect of God's ordinances, and break his ſabbaths, without bringing upon ourſelves *ſwift deſtruction*:—And laſtly, Whether at any time I cried down, ſuffering reproach for Chriſt, and parting with all things, even life itſelf, to follow him and his doctrine.

Nay, do not you know in your own breaſt, that my inſiſting upon theſe good works, and encouraging all I can to do them, is what makes me to be deſpiſed and rejected by many, and perhaps by yourſelf? How can you then, without wounding your own conſcience,

accuſe

accuſe me of preaching againſt good works? Are you not rather the perſon that ſpeaks againſt them? Are you not *yourſelf* one of thoſe who ſay, that, "For their part they ſee no need of ſo many ſermons, lectures, and ſacraments in the church: no need of ſo much ſinging, reading, praying, and godly converſation in private houſes: no need of ſuch ſtrictneſs in keeping the ſabbath-day holy, &c."

If you are one of them, you add detraction to infidelity, and bearing falſe teſtimony to open profaneneſs [or Laodicean lukewarmneſs.] You decry good works yourſelf by your words, and your example; and when you have done, you lay the ſin at my door; you ſay that I preach againſt them! O how will you reconcile this conduct, I ſhall not ſay to Chriſtianity, but even to Heathen honeſty!

In the *ſecond* claſs of good works, divines place works of charity; and theſe are of two ſorts, ſuch as are done to the *bodies*, and ſuch as are done to the *ſouls* of men. The former are [for the moſt part] enumerated by our Lord, Mat. xxv. They conſiſt in giving food to the hungry and drink to the thirſty; in entertaining ſtrangers, eaſing the oppreſſed, clothing the naked, attending the ſick, viſiting the priſoners, [and burying the dead, from ſcriptural and not from Phariſaical motives.]

Now will any one affirm, that I ever ſpoke a word againſt doing any one of theſe good works?—Againſt doing them *in a wrong manner*, and *to wrong ends*, I have often ſpoken; and ſo have all the preachers, who do not daub the wall with untempered mortar: Chriſt firſt, Mat. vi. 2. St. Paul next, 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2, 3. and our church after them; ſee the homily on faſting.—But I aſk it again, Who ever heard me ſpeak one word *againſt doing them?* On the contrary, have I not declared again and again, that even "a cup of cold water, given in Chriſt's name, ſhould in no wiſe loſe its reward;"—ſhould certainly be rewarded with eternal life; [and do not ſome of you know, that within theſe two years, I have loſt many of my religious

gious friends, by making a ſtand for the evangelical *worthineſs* of the works of faith?]

As for works of mercy done to the *ſouls* of men, ſuch as [giving a Chriſtian education to our children and apprentices,] comforting the afflicted, encouraging the dejected, ſtrengthening the weak, exhorting the careleſs, ſuccouring the tempted, inſtructing the ignorant, [ſympathizing with mourners] warning the ſtubborn, reproving ſin, ſtopping immorality, rebuking profaneneſs, and helping each other in the narrow way; it is known to many, that my name is caſt out as evil by ſabbath-breakers, ſwearers, and drunkards, for endeavouring to walk in theſe good works myſelf, and to make others walk in them.

And yet *you*, who poſſibly ridicule all thoſe good works, and dream of being ſaved without them; *you*, who do perhaps juſt the reverſe of them, ſtrengthening one another's hands in licentiouſneſs and profaneneſs, in ſabbath-breaking, ſwearing, or ſcoffing at every thing that looks like ſerioufneſs; you *accuſe* me of deſpiſing or diſcountenancing good works!—O tell it not in Gath, publiſh it not in Aſkelon, leſt the very Philiſtines laugh at the glaring inconſiſtency of your words and conduct.

Good works of the *third* claſs, relate to keeping under the fleſh, and all its ſinful appetites. The chief of theſe works, are a moderate uſe of meat, drink, and ſleep; ſelf-denial, [in apparel, furniture, and equipage;] chaſtity [in all its branches; ſubduing our ſlothful, rebellious fleſh by] early riſing, abſtinence, faſting; [and, in a word, by taking up our daily croſs, and following our abſtemious, and yet laborious Lord.]

[Permit me to do as St. Paul,—to "ſpeak as it were fooliſhly in this confidence of boaſting."] Have I not enforced the neceſſity of theſe good works both publicly, and from houſe to houſe? Have you not ſometimes even gone away from this place of worſhip, ſecretly diſpleaſed at my inſiſting ſo much upon them; complaining perhaps, "that I went too far, or that no body could live up to what I preach;" and

making a hundred ſuch remarks, inſtead of meditating upon theſe words of our Lord: "With man indeed it is impoſſible, but with God all things are poſſible?" And yet you now complain that I do not preach up good works. Pray, my brethren, be conſiſtent; keep to one point, and do not ſay and unſay: I can no more be too ſtrict, and yet make too little of good works, than I can go eaſt and weſt at the ſame time. Only think,—and you will perceive that your very complaints juſtify me, that your ſayings overturn one another, and that your own mouths prove you perverſe.

You will probaly ſay, "Have we not heard you affirm more than once, that no body can be ſaved by his works: yea, that a man may go as conſtantly to church, as the Phariſee did to the temple, be as virtuous as he was, pay tithes as exactly as he did, and be *damned* after all? Can you deny having preached this doctrine twenty times?"

Deny it!—By no means. It is a doctrine for which, God being my helper, I am ready to go to the ſtake. It is the very doctrine, that I have eſtabliſhed in the former part of this diſcourſe: how then can I deny it?

Here methinks a Phariſee replies in triumph: "Well, then, you plead guilty to the charge: you confeſs that you have preached twenty times againſt good works."

[I deny the concluſion.] Have you not underſtanding enough to ſee, there is a vaſt difference between preaching againſt the *merit* of good works, and preaching againſt good works themſelves? Between ſaying, that obedience to the king will never get us the crown of Great-Britain, and affirming that we owe the king no obedience? In a word, between ſaying that good works will never procure us heaven, [as the *primary* and ſtrictly ſpeaking *meritorious* cauſe of our ſalvation] and declaring that we ought not to do good works? Surely your rational faculties are not ſo impaired, but you may perceive, theſe propoſitions are by no means of the ſame import.

If

If I say, that eating will never make me immortal, that drinking will never turn me into an angel, and that doing my work will never take me to the third heaven; do I so much as hint that eating is useless, drinking of no service, and doing my business unprofitable? O how does prejudice blind even men of reason and religion! How hardly does truth go down with us, when we do not love it! How gladly do we dress it up in a fool's coat, that we may have some pretence to despise and reject it!

If you would speak according to *strict* truth, my brethren, you would not say that I "preach against good works, that I run down good works, &c." which is a mistake, as I shewed just now: but you would say, that I preach *against the merit of good works in point of salvation:* this is very true, so I do, and so I am determined to do, by God's grace, as long as I live. So did Christ and his apostles; so do our articles and homilies; and so the children of God have done in all ages. ☞ Those of the Old Testament [far from mentioning any proper merit of their own, cried out: "Now mine eye seeth thee, I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes," Job xlii. 5.—"Wo is me for I am undone, because I am (by nature, and have been by practice) a man of unclean lips." Isa. vi. 5.] Those of the new, prayed to "be found in Christ, not having their own [Pharisaic] righteousness which is by the law of works, but the [evangelical] righteousness which is by faith in Jesus Christ," Phil. iii. 9. And those of our church profess, that "They are not worthy to gather the crumbs under the Lord's table, and that they do not come to it, trusting in their own righteousness, (or good works,) but in God's manifold and great mercies through Jesus Christ;" so far are they from thinking, that they [properly] merit salvation [either in whole or in part.] See Com. Service.

☞ Yea, I declare it as *upon the house-top*, of all the false doctrines that ever came out of the pit of hell, none has done such execution for Satan in the church of God [as the Pharisaic conceit that we have, or may have any *proper, original* merit.] Stealing,

drunkenneſs, and adultery have ſlain their *thouſands*; but this damnable error, which is the very root of unbelief, its *ten thouſands*. ☞ It blinded the Phariſees, and hardened the Jews againſt Chriſt. It plunges into everlaſting fire all nominal Chriſtians, who have a form of godlineſs, but deny the power thereof.

Yea, ſtrange, as the aſſertion may ſeem to ſome, this [pernicious error] feeds immorality, and ſecretly nouriſhes all manner of vice. The ſcripture tells us, 1 Cor. vi. 9, that "neither fornicators, nor effeminate, neither thieves, nor covetous, neither drunkards, nor revilers, neither unrighteous nor extortioners, ſhall inherit the kingdom of God." Now how comes it to paſs, that ſo many, who are guilty of one or another of thoſe abominations, remain as eaſy as if they were guiltleſs? Why, this damnable notion, that the merit of their works atones for the guilt of their ſins, makes them think, that they ſhall do well enough in the end. "I get drunk now and then, ſays one, but I am honeſt."—"I oppreſs or cheat my neighbour, ſays another, but I go to church and ſacrament."—"I love money or diverſions, ſays a third, but I bleſs God, I am neither a thief nor a drunkard,"—"I am paſſionate and ſwear ſometimes, ſays a fourth, but my heart is good, and I never keep malice in my breaſt; beſides, I'll repent and mend ſome time or other before I die."—Now the ſum of all thoſe pleas amounts to this: "I do the devil's works, but I do good works too. I am guilty of one piece of wickedneſs, but not of all: and I hope, that thro' the merit of the good which I do, and of the evil which I have left undone, Chriſt will have mercy upon me."

☞ Thus all our [Phariſaic] delays of converſion, and all our remorſeleſs going on in ſin and wickedneſs, are founded upon the doctrine of [Phariſaic] merits. Well then may our church call it "*a deviliſh doctrine*, which *is mere blaſphemy againſt God's mercy*:" a doctrine, which turns Chriſt out of his throne [by refuſing him the honour of being the meritorious cauſe of our ſalvation:] a doctrine which [by crooked ways] leads firſt to licentiouſneſs, as the conduct of many,

who

who cry up the merit of good works [ſo called] too plainly ſhews; and next to Phariſaic morality and formality; and from both, except converting grace prevent it, into endleſs miſery; for, *No doubt*, ſays biſhop Latimer in his ſermon on the twelfth day, *he that departeth out of this world in that opinion* [or, as he expreſſes it in the ſame paragraph, thoſe who "*think to be ſaved by the law*, by the firſt covenant] *ſhall never come to heaven:*" [For they ſet their hearts againſt Chriſt; and, like the obſtinate Phariſees of old, not only miſtake the works of unbelief for good works; but give them alſo the place of the *primary, meritorious cauſe* of eternal ſalvation; when, if they were the works of faith, they would only be a *ſecondary evidencing cauſe* of it. Now, as ſuch men cannot poſſibly do this, without the greateſt degree of ſpiritual pride, impenitency, and unbelief; it is plain, that, if they die confirmed in this grand antichriſtian error, they cannot be ſaved: for St. Paul informs us that pride is "the condemnation of the devil;" and our Lord declares, that "except we repent we ſhall all periſh, and that he who believeth not ſhall be damned."]

Fourth Part.

It is time to come to the laſt thing propoſed, which was to ſhow, why good works cannot deſerve ſalvation in whole or in part; and to anſwer the old cavil, "If good works cannot ſave us, why ſhould we trouble ourſelves about them?" [In doing the former, I ſhall attempt to give *Phariſaiſm* a finiſhing ſtroke: and in doing the latter, I ſhall endeavour to guard the ſcriptural doctrine of grace againſt *Antinomianiſm*, which prevails almoſt as much among profeſſed believers, as Phariſaiſm does among profeſſed Moraliſts.]

And firſt, that good works cannot merit ſalvation in part, much leſs altogether, I prove by the following arguments.

1. We muſt be wholly ſaved by the covenant of *works*, or by the covenant of *grace*; my text ſhewing moſt clearly, that a third covenant made up of merits

[according to the firft,] and divine mercy [according to the fecond,] is as imaginary a thing in divinity, as a fifth element made up of fire and water would be in natural philofophy.

2. There is lefs proportion between heavenly glory and our works, than between the fun and a mote that flies in the air: therefore to pretend, that they will avail towards [purchafing or properly meriting] heaven, argues want of common fenfe as well as want of humility.

3. God has wifely determined to fave *proud* man in a way that excludes boafting. "God is juft, and the juftifier of him that believes in Jefus." Where is boafting then? fays the apoftle; It is excluded, anfwers he: By what covenant? By the covenant of works? No, but by the law of faith, by the covenant of grace, whofe condition is faith in Jefus Chrift. "Therefore we conclude, fays he, that a man is juftified by faith, without the works of the law." Rom. iii. 27, 28. If our good works deferve the leaft part of our falvation, we may then juftly boaft that our own arm has got us that part of the victory; and we have reafon to glory in ourfelves, contrary to the fcriptures, which fay, that "every mouth muft be ftopped, that boafting is excluded, and that he who glories, muft glory in the Lord."

[As to *felf-exaltation*, the mouth of Gabriel is not lefs fhut before the throne, than that of Mary Magdalen. Therefore, if any out of hell glory in themfelves, it is only thofe felf-righteous fons of Lucifer and Pride, to whom our Lord fays ftill, "You are of your father the devil, whofe works ye do, when ye feek to kill me, and glory in yourfelves.]

4. Our *beft* works have fuch a mixture of imperfection, that they muft be atoned for, and made acceptable by Chrift's blood; fo far are they from atoning for the leaft fin, [and meriting our acceptance] before God.

5. If ever we did one truly good work, the merit is not ours, but God's, who by his free grace "prevented, accompanied, and followed us," in the performance.

formance. "For it is God, who of his good pleasure worketh in us both to will and to do," Phil. ii. 12. Not I, says the apostle, after mentioning his good works, but the grace of God in me, 1 Cor. xv. 10, compared with James i. 17.

6. We perpetually say at Church: Glory be to the Father, as Creator; and to the Son, as Redeemer; and to the Holy Ghost, as Sanctifier. Christ is then to have all the glory of our redemption: But if our good works come in for any share in the purchase of heaven, we must come in also for some share of the glory of our [redemption.] Thus Christ will no longer be the only Redeemer: we shall be co-redeemers with him, and consequently we shall have a share in the doxology; which is a blasphemous supposition.

7. Our Lord himself decides the question in those remarkable word, ☞ "When you have done all that is commanded you;" and where is the man that [according to the law of innocence] has done [without interruption] I shall not say all, but the one half of it? say, "We are unprofitable servants. ☜ Now it is plain, that unprofitable servants do not merit in whole or in part, to sit down at their master's table, and be admitted as children to a share of his estate. Therefore, if God gives heaven to believers, it is entirely owing to his free mercy, [according to the law of faith] through the merits of Jesus Christ, and not at all through the merits of our own works.

8. I shall close these observations by St. Paul's unanswerable argument. "If righteousness comes by the law," if salvation comes by [the covenant of] works, "then Christ died in vain. Gal. ii. 21. Whence it follows that if it comes in part by the works of the law [of innocence,] part of Christ's sufferings were vain; a supposition which ends in the same blasphemy [against the Mediator.]

9. That man might deserve any thing of God, upon the footing of *proper* worthiness, or merit of equivalence, God should stand in need of some thing, which it is in man's power to bestow: but this is absolutely impossible: for God being *self-sufficient* in his infinite

infinite fulness, is far above any want; and man being a dependent creature, every moment supported by his Maker and Preserver, has nothing, and can do nothing, to which God has not a far greater right than man himself. This is what the apostle asserts where he says, "Who has given Him *first*, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?"—But much more in this remarkable passage; "Who maketh thee to differ from another?" If thou sayest, The number of my talents and the proper use I have made of them: I ask again, who gave thee those talents? And who superadded grace, wisdom, and an opportunity to improve them?—Here we must all give glory to God, and say with St. James, "Every good gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights."

Upon this consideration the apostle proceeds to check the Christian Pharisee thus; "What hast thou, that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?"—Whence it follows, that though St. Paul himself glories in, and boasts of his disinterestedness, yet he did not glory in that virtue *as if he had not received it*; No: he gave the *original* glory of it to *Him, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things.* The glory of bestowing original gifts upon us belongs then to God alone; and the original glory of the humility with which we receive, and of the faithfulness, with which we use those gifts, belongs also to him alone; although, in the very nature of things, we have such a derived share of that glory, as gives room to the reasonableness of divine rewards. For why should one be rewarded more than another; yea, why should one be rewarded rather than punished, if derived faithfulness does not make him more rewardable?

As the preceding arguments [against the proper merit of works] will, I hope, abundantly satisfy all those who have not entirely cast away the Christian revelation, I pass to the old objection. "If good works cannot [merit us heaven,] or save us, why should we trouble ourselves about them?"

I answer,

I anſwer, 1. ☞ We are to do good works, to ſhew our obedience to our heavenly Father. ☜ As a child obeys his parents, not to *purchaſe* their eſtate, but becauſe he is their child [and does not chuſe to be diſinherited;] ſo believers obey God, not to get heaven for their wages; but, becauſe he is their Father, [and they would not provoke him to diſinherit them.†]

2. ☞ We are to abound in all good works, to be juſtified before men [now, and before the Judge of all the earth in the great day;] and to ſhew that our faith is ſaving. St. James ſtrongly inſiſts upon this, chap. ii. 18. ☜ "Shew me thy faith without thy works, ſays he, and I will ſhew thee my faith by my works:" That is, Thou ſayeſt, thou haſt faith, [becauſe thou waſt once juſtified by faith;] but thou doſt not the works of a believer: thou canſt follow vanity, and conform to this evil world: thou canſt ſwear or break the ſabbath; lie, cheat, or get drunk; rail at thy neighbour, or live in uncleanneſs: in a word, thou canſt do one or another of the devil's works. Thy works therefore give thee the lie, and ſhew that thy faith is [now like] the devil's faith; for if *faith without works is dead*, how doubly dead muſt faith with *bad* works be! § But *I will ſhew thee my faith by my works*, adds the apoſtle, i. e. By conſtantly abſtaining from all evil works, and ſteadily walking in all ſorts of good works, I will make thee confeſs, that I am really *in Chriſt a new creature*, and that my faith is living and genuine.

3. Our Saviour told his diſciples, that they were to ☞ do good works, not to purchaſe heaven, but that

† This argument is weak without the additions. Our Lord informs us that when the Father in the goſpel ſays to his fair-ſpoken child, SON, "Go work to-day in my vineyard," he anſwers, "I go Sir, and goes not;" And God himſelf ſays, "I have nouriſhed and brought up CHILDREN, but they have rebelled againſt me." Wo to the parents, who have ſuch children, and have no power to cut off an entail!

§ If this ſingle clauſe of my old ſermon, ſtands, ſo will the Minutes and the Checks. But the whole argument is a mere jeſt, if a man that wallows in adultery, murder, or inceſt, may have as true, juſtifying faith, as David had when he killed Goliah.

others

others might be ftirred up to ferve God. You then, that have found the way of falvation by Chrift, *let your light fo fhine before men, that* even *they*, who fpeak evil of the doctrine of faith, *feeing your good works, may glorify your Father who is in heaven.* ☞ Matt. v. 16.

4. ☞ We are to do good works out of *gratitude* and *love* to our dear Redeemer, who having [conditionally] purchafed heaven for us with his precious blood, ☞ afks the fmall return of our love and obedience. *If you love me*, fays he, *keep my commandments*, John xiv. 15. [This motive is noble, and continues powerful fo long as we keep our firft love. But alas! it has little force with regard to the myriads, that rather *fear* than love God: And it has loft its force in all thofe, who *have denied the faith*, or *made fhipwreck of it*, or *caft off their firft faith*, and confequently their *firft love*. The multitude of thefe, in all ages, has been innumerable. I fear, we might fay of juftified believers, what our Lord did of the cleanfed lepers: "Were there not ten cleanfed? but where are the nine?" Alas! like the apoftates mentioned by St. Paul, they are turned afide after the flefh, after the world, after fables, after Antinomian dotages, after vain jangling, after Satan himfelf. 1 Tim. v. 15.]

5. We are to be careful to maintain good works, [not only that we may not lofe our confidence in God, 1 John iii. 19, &c. but alfo] that we may nourifh and increafe our faith or fpiritual life; [or, to ufe the language of St. James, that faith may work with our works, and that by works our faith may be made perfect.] As a man [in health, who is † threatened by no danger,] does not walk that his walking may pro-

† Formerly I did not conſider that as Noah walked into the ark, and Lot out of Sodom, to ſave their lives; ſo ſinners are called to turn from their iniquity, and do that which is lawful and right to ſave their *ſouls alive*. Nor did I obſerve, that ſaints are commanded to *walk in good works*, leſt the deſtroyer overtake them, and they become *ſons of perdition*. However, in Babel, ſuch capital overſights did me "*much credit*."

cure

cure him life [or save his life from destruction:] but that he may preserve his health, and [add to] his activity: So a believer, does not walk in good works to get [an initial life of grace, or a primary title to an] eternal life [of glory:] but to keep up and increase the vigour of his faith, by which he has [already a title to, and the earnest of] eternal life. For as the best health without exercise is soon destroyed, so the strongest faith without works will soon droop and die. Hence it is that St. Paul exhorts us to *hold faith and a good conscience, which some having put away*, by refusing to walk in good works, *concerning faith have made shipwreck.*]

6. ☞ We are not to do good works to obtain heaven by them [as if they were the *primary*, and *properly meritorious* cause of our salvation.] This proud, antichristian motive would poison the best doings of the greatest saints, if saints could thus trample upon the blood of their Saviour: Such a wild conceit being only the Pharisee's cleaner way to hell. But we are to do them, because they shall be rewarded in heaven. ☜ To understand this we must remember, that, according to the gospel and our liturgy, God *opens the kingdom of heaven to all believers:* [because *true believers* are always *true workers*; true faith always working by love to God's commandments. Next to Christ then, to speak the language of some injudicious divines,] Faith alone, when it works by love, takes us to heaven: [Or rather, to avoid an apparent contradiction, Faith and its works are the way to heaven:] But as there are stars of different magnitude in the material heaven, so also in the spiritual. Some who, like St. Paul, have eminently shined by "the work of faith, the patience of hope, and the labour of love," shall shine like the brightest stars, [or the sun:] and ☞ others, who, like the dying thief and infants, have had [little or] no time to shew their faith [or holiness] by their works, shall enjoy a less degree of glorious bliss: But all shall ascribe the whole of their salvation only to the mercy of God, the merits of Christ, and the efficacy of his blood and

spirit,

fpirit, &c. according to St. John's vifion, "I beheld, and lo a great multitude of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues, ftood before the throne, with palms in their hands, cloathed with robes, that they had waſhed, and made white in the blood of the Lamb:" and [while our Lord ſaid to them by his gracious looks, according to the doctrine of ſecondary, inſtrumental cauſes, "Walk with me in white, for you are WORTHY, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you, for I was hungry and ye gave me meat, &c.] they cried [according to the doctrine of primary and properly meritorious cauſes,] not "Salvation to OUR endeavours and good works;" but "Salvation to OUR God, who ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

* [Thus, by the rules of celeſtial courteſy, to which our Lord vouchſafes to ſubmit in glory; while the ſaints *juſtly* draw a veil over their works of faith, to extol *only* their Saviour's merits; HE, *kindly* paſſes over his own blood and righteouſneſs, to make mention *only* of their works and obedience. *They*, ſetting their ſeal to the firſt goſpel-axiom, ſhout with great truth, "*Salvation to God and the Lamb!*" And HE, ſetting his ſeal to the ſecond goſpel-axiom, replies with great condeſcenſion: Salvation *to them that are worthy! Eternal ſalvation to all that obey me.* Rev. iii. Heb. v. 9.]

* [Therefore, notwithſtanding the perpetual aſſaults of proud Phariſees and Antinomians, the two goſpel-axioms ſtand unſhaken upon the two fundamental, inſeparable doctrines of faith and works,—of *proper* merit in Chriſt, and *derived* worthineſs in his members. Penitent believers freely receive all from the God of grace and mercy, through Chriſt; and humble workers freely return all to the God of holineſs and glory, through the ſame adorable Mediator. Thus God has *all the honour of freely beſtowing* upon us a crown of righteouſneſs, in a way of judicious mercy and diſtributive juſtice; while we, *through grace*, have *all the honour of freely receiving it*, in a way of penitential faith and obedient gratitude. To

him

him therefore, one eternal Jehovah, in Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, be aſcribed *all* the merit, honour, praiſe, and dominion, *worthy* of a God, for ever and ever.]

APPENDIX.

SHARP-SIGHTED readers will ſee by this ſermon, that nothing is more difficult than *rightly to divide the Word of God*. The ways of *Truth* and *Error* lie cloſe together, though they never coincide. When ſome preachers ſay, that "The road to heaven paſſes very near the mouth of hell," they do not mean, that the road to heaven and the road to hell are one and the ſame. If I aſſert, that the way of *Truth* runs parallel to the ditch of *Error*, I by no means intend to confound them. Let *Error* therefore come, in ſome things, ever ſo near *Truth*, yet it can no more be the *Truth*, than a filthy ditch, that runs parallel to a good road, can be the road.

It is often a thing little in appearance, that turns the ſcale of Truth; nevertheleſs, the difference between a ſcale *turned* or *not turned*, is as real as the difference between *right* and *wrong*. I make this obſervation: 1. To ſhew that although my opponents come very near me in ſome things, and I go very near them in others, yet the difference between us is as eſſential, as the difference between *truth* and *error*; And 2. to remind them and myſelf, that we ought ſo much the more to exerciſe Chriſtian forbearance towards each other, as we find it difficult, whenever we do not ſtand upon our guard, to do juſtice to every part of the Truth, without ſeeming to diſſent even from ourſelves. However, our ſhort ſightedneſs and twilight knowledge do not alter the nature of things. The truth of the Anti-phariſaic and Anti-Criſpian goſpel is as immutable as its eternal Author; and whether I have marked out its boundaries with a tolerable degree of juſtneſs or not, I muſt ſay as the heathen poet:

Eſt modus in rebus, ſunt certi denique fines,
Quos ultra citra que nequit conſiſtere rectum.†

† Truth is confined within her firm bounds: Nay, there is a middle line equally diſtant from all extremes; on that line ſhe ſtands, and to miſs her, you need only ſtep over it to the right hand or to the left.

A SCRITURAL ESSAY on the Rewardableneſs of Works according to the Covenant of Grace:

Containing, I. A VARIETY of Scriptures, which ſhew, that HEAVEN ITSELF is the gracious REWARD of the WORKS of Faith, and that Believers may loſe that Reward by bad Works. II. An ANSWER to the moſt plauſible Objections againſt this Doctrine. III. SOME REFLECTIONS upon the unreaſonableneſs of thoſe, who ſcorn to work with an eye to the Reward, that God offers to excite us to Obedience.

FIRST PART.

HAVING *particularly* guarded in the preceding diſcourſe the doctrine of SALVATION *by the covenant of grace*, and having endeavoured to ſecure the *foundation* of the goſpel againſt the unwearied attacks of Phariſees; I ſhall now *particularly* guard the WORKS *of the covenant of grace*, and by that means ſecure the *ſuperſtructure* againſt the perpetual aſſaults of Antinomians; a part of my work this, which is ſo much the more important, as the uſe of a ſtrong *Foundation* is only to bear up an uſeful ſtructure.

None but fools act without motive. To deprive a wiſe man of every motive to act, is to keep him in total inaction; and to rob him of any grand motive, is to weaken his willingneſs to act, or his fervour in acting. The love of God is undoubtedly the moſt generous motive to obedience: In thouſands of weak believers, love is not yet well kindled; it is rather *a ſmoaking flax*, than a blazing fire; in thouſands of Laodicean profeſſors it is ſcarce *lukewarm*; and in all

apoſtates

apoſtates *it is waxed cold.* Therefore, in the preſent ſickly ſtate of the church militant, it is as abſurd in preachers, to urge no motive of good works but love; as it would be in phyſicians to inſiſt, that a *good ſtomach* muſt be the only motive, from which their patients ought to take either food or phyſic.

Our Lord, far from countenancing our refinements in this reſpect, perpetually ſecures the practice of good works by *promiſing heaven* to all that perſevere in doing them; while he deters us from ſin, by *threatening deſtruction* to all that perſiſt in committing it; working thus alternately upon our *hopes* and *fears*, thoſe powerful ſprings of action.

The force of this double incentive to practical religion, I greatly weakened, when, being carried away by the ſtream of Solifidianiſm, I raſhly ſaid in my old ſermon, that "good works ſhall be rewarded in heaven and eternal life, although not with eternal life and heaven." An Antinomian error this, which I publicly renounce, and againſt which I enter the following proteſt.

If the oracles of God command us to work FROM an *initial* life of *grace*, FOR an *eternal* life of *glory*; frequently annexing the promiſe of heavenly bliſs to good works, and threatening all *workers of iniquity* with hell-torments; it follows, that heaven will be the *gracious reward* of good works, and hell the *juſt wages* of bad ones.

I readily grant however, that, if we conſider ourſelves merely as *ſinners*, in the light of the *firſt* goſpel axiom, and according to the *covenant of works*, which we have ſo frequently broken; heaven is MERELY the GIFT *of God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt:* for, according to *that* covenant, deſtruction is the wages of all who have committed ſin. But, if we are *converted* ſinners or obedient *believers:* and if we conſider ourſelves in the light of the *ſecond* goſpel axiom, and according to the Covenant of Grace; every unprejudiced perſon, who believes the Bible, muſt allow that heaven is the gracious REWARD of our works of faith.

An illuſtration may help the reader to ſee the juſtneſs of this diſtinction:—A charitable nobleman diſcharges the debts of ten inſolvent priſoners, ſets them up in great or little farms, according to their reſpective abilities: and laying down a thouſand pounds before them, he ſays: "I have already done much for you, but I will do more ſtill. I freely give you this purſe, to encourage your induſtry. You ſhall ſhare this gold among you, if you manage your farms according to my directions: but if you let your fields be over-run with thorns, you ſhall not only loſe the bounty I deſign for the induſtrious, but forfeit all my preceding favours." Now, who does not ſee, that the thouſand pounds thus laid down, are a *free gift* of the nobleman; that nevertheleſs, upon the performance of the condition he has fixed, they become a *gracious reward* of induſtry; and that conſequently, the obtaining of this reward turns now entirely upon the *works of induſtry* performed by the farmers.

Juſt ſo, eternal ſalvation is the *free gift* of God thro' Jeſus Chriſt; and yet the *obtaining* of it (by adults) turns entirely upon their *works of faith*; that is, upon their *works* as well as upon their *faith*. Hence the Scripture ſays indifferently, "He that believeth is not condemned;" and, "If thou doeſt well ſhalt thou not be accepted?" "All that believe are juſtified;" and, "He that worketh righteouſneſs is accepted."—Our Lord, ſpeaking of a weeping penitent, ſays equally: "Her ſins, which are many, are forgiven; for ſhe loved much;" and, "Thy ſins are forgiven, thy Faith hath ſaved thee." As for St. Paul, tho' he always juſtly excludes the works of unbelief, and merely ceremonial works, yet he ſo joins *faith*, and *works* of faith, as to ſhew us, that they are equally neceſſary to eternal ſalvation: "There is no condemnation, ſays he, to them that are in Chriſt" by faith: (Here is the Phariſees portion) "who walk not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit:" (Here is the Antinomian's portion.) Hence it appears, that living faith, *now* and always, works righteouſneſs; and that

the works of righteouſneſs *now* and always accompany faith, ſo long as it remains *living*.

" I know this is the doctrine, ſays judicious Mr. Baxter, that will have the loudeſt outcries raiſed againſt it: and will make ſome cry out, Hereſy, Popery, Socinianiſm! and what not? For my own part, the Searcher of hearts knoweth, that not ſingularity, or any good-will to Popery, provoketh me to entertain it; but that I have earneſtly ſought the Lord's direction upon my knees, before I durſt adventure on it: and that I reſiſted the light of this concluſion as long as I was able." May this bright teſtimony make way for an illuminated cloud of prophets and apoſtles! and may the Sun of Righteouſneſs riſing behind it, ſo ſcatter the ſhades of error, that we may awake out of our Antinomian dreams, and ſee a glorious, unclouded goſpel-day!

That in ſubordination to Chriſt, our eternal ſalvation depends upon good works, i. e. upon the works of faith, will appear indubitable to them that believe the Bible, and candidly conſider the following Scriptures, in which HEAVEN and eternal life IN GLORY are ſuſpended upon *works*, if they ſpring from a ſincere *belief* in the light of our diſpenſation: I ſay, if they ſpring from true *faith*, it being abſolutely impoſſible for an *Heathen*, and much more for a *Chriſtian*, to work righteouſneſs without *believing* in ſome degree, " that God is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him," as well as the puniſher of them that preſumptuouſly ſin againſt him: " For without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God;" all faithleſs works ſpringing merely from ſuperſtition, like thoſe of Baal's prieſts, or from hypocriſy like thoſe of the Phariſees. Having thus guarded again the doctrine of FAITH, I produce ſome of the many Scriptures that directly or indirectly annex the abovementioned reward to WORKS: And,

1. To *conſideration, converſion*, and *exerciſing ourſelves to godlineſs*.—" Becauſe he conſidereth, and turneth away from all his tranſgreſſions, &c. he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not die."—" When the wicked

man turneth away from his wickedneſs, &c. he ſhall ſave his ſoul alive."—"Wherefore turn yourſelves and live ye."—"Exerciſe thyſelf unto godlineſs, for it is profitable unto all things; having the promiſe of the life that now is, and that which is to come."

2. *To doing the will of God.*—"He that does the will of my Father, ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven."—"He that does the will of God, abideth for ever."—"Whoſoever ſhall do the will of God, the ſame is my brother and ſiſter;"—i. e the ſame is an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Chriſt.

3. *To diligent labour, and earneſt endeavours.*—"O man of God, lay hold on eternal life."—"Work out your own ſalvation."—"Labour for the meat that endureth to everlaſting life."—"In ſo doing thou ſhalt ſave thyſelf."—"Narrow is the gate that leads to life.—Strive to enter in.—The violent preſs into the kingdom of God, and take it by force."

4. *To keeping the commandments.*—"Bleſſed are they that do his commandments, &c. that they may enter through the gates into the city, i. e. into heaven."—"If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."—"Thou haſt anſwered right: This do and thou ſhalt live."—"There is one Lawgiver, who is able to ſave and to deſtroy:" (ſome of whoſe laws run thus:) "Forgive, and ye ſhall be forgiven.—Bleſſed are the merciful, for they ſhall obtain mercy.—Bleſſed are the peace-makers, for they ſhall be called the children of God," (and, of courſe, the heirs of the kingdom.) "The king ſhall ſay unto them, Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you; for I was hungry and ye gave me meat," &c.—"Whatſoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, knowing that of the Lord ye ſhall receive the reward of the inheritance: But he that does wrong, ſhall receive for the wrong which he hath done, and there is no reſpect of perſons."

5. *To running, fighting, faithfully laying up treaſure in heaven,* and *feeding the flock of God.*—"They who run in a race, run all; but one receiveth the prize: So run that you may obtain. Now they are

temperate

temperate in all things to obtain a corruptible crown; but we, an incorruptible. I therefore ſo run,—fight,—and bring my body into ſubjection," (that I may obtain:) "leſt I myſelf ſhould be a caſt away." i. e. ſhould not be approved of, ſhould be rejected, and loſe my incorruptible crown.—"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life."—"Lay up treaſure in heaven."——"Make yourſelves friends with the mammon of unrighteouſneſs, that when you fail, they may receive you into everlaſting habitations."——"Charge them who are rich, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, laying up in ſtore for themſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."—"Feed the flock of God, &c. being examples to the flock, and when the chief Shepherd ſhall appear, ye ſhall receive the crown of glory, that fadeth not away."

6. *To a godly walk.* "There is no condemnation to them, &c. that walk not after the fleſh."—"As many as walk according to this rule, mercy (be, or will be) on them."—"The Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

7. *To perſevering watchfulneſs, faithfulneſs, prayer,* &c. "He that endureth unto the end, the ſame ſhall be ſaved."—"Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life."—"Bleſſed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he ſhall receive the crown of life."—"To him that overcometh, will I grant to ſit with me in my throne.——To him that keepeth my words unto the end, &c. will I give the morning ſtar."—"Take heed to yourſelves, watch and pray always, that ye may be counted worthy to eſcape, &c. and to ſtand before the Son of man." In a word,

8. *To patient continuance in mortifying the deeds of the body, and in well doing.* "If ye live after the fleſh, ye ſhall die; but if ye through the ſpirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live.—For he that ſoweth to his fleſh, ſhall of the fleſh reap perdition: but he that ſoweth to the ſpirit, ſhall of the ſpirit reap life everlaſting: And let us not be weary in well-doing,

doing, for in due ſeaſon we ſhall reap (not, if we faint, but,) if we faint not."—" He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." —" Ye have your fruit unto holineſs, and the end everlaſting life."——" God, at the revelation of his righteous judgment, will render to every man according to his deeds: eternal life to them, who, by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for glory. Anguiſh upon every ſoul of man that does evil, &c. but glory to every man that worketh good, &c. for there is no reſpect of perſons with God."

Is it not aſtoniſhing, that, in ſight of ſo many plain ſcriptures, the Solifidians ſhould ſtill ridicule the paſſport of good works, and give it to the winds as a " paper-kite ? " However, if the preceding texts do not appear ſufficient, I can ſend another volley of goſpel-truths, to ſhow that the initial ſalvation of believers themſelves may be loſt through bad works.

" I know thy works, &c. ſo then becauſe thou art lukewarm I will ſpue thee out of my mouth."—— " Grudge not one againſt another, brethren, leſt ye be damned " (in the original it is the ſame word, which is rendered damned, Mark xvi. 16.) " If we ſuffer, we ſhall alſo reign with him: if we (believers) deny him, he will alſo deny us."——" Add to your faith virtue, &c. charity, &c. if ye do theſe things ye ſhall never fall; for ſo an entrance ſhall be miniſtered unto you abundantly into the everlaſting kingdom of our Lord."—" It had been better for them, that have eſcaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of our Saviour, (i. e. for believers) not to have known the way of righteouſneſs, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."——" Every tree, that bringeth not forth good fruit, is cut down, and caſt into the fire.---Every branch IN ME, that beareth not fruit, my Father taketh away.---Abide in me, &c. If a man abide not in me, (by keeping my commandments in faith) he is caſt forth as a branch, and is withered; and (he ſhall ſhare the fate of the branches that have really belonged to the natural vine, and now bear no more fruit,) men gather them, and caſt them into

into the fire, and they are burned."---The fig-tree in the Lord's moral vineyard is cut down, for not bearing fruit.---"Him that ſinneth I will blot out of my book. Some having put away a good conſcience, concerning faith have made ſhipwreck."---"Such as turn back to their own wickedneſs, the Lord ſhall lead them forth with the evil doers."---"Towards thee, goodneſs, if (by continuing in obedience) thou continue in his goodneſs, otherwiſe thou ſhalt be cut off."

Again, "For the wickedneſs of their doings, I will drive them out of my houſe, I will love them no more."---"Some are already turned aſide after Satan. ---having damnation becauſe they have caſt off their firſt faith" (the faith that works by love)---the myſtery of faith kept in a pure conſcience,---the faith unfeigned" [that the apoſtle couples with] "a good conſcience;"---the faith that cries like Rachel, *Give me children*, give me good works, *or elſe I die*;---the faith that faints without obedience, and actually dies by bad works. The following ſcriptures abundantly proving that *faith*, and conſequently *the juſt* who *live by faith*, can *die by bad works*.

"When a righteous man † doth turn from his righteouſneſs, and commit iniquity, &c. he ſhall DIE in his

† That this is ſpoken of a *truly*-righteous man, i. e. of a believer, appears from the following reaſons: (1) The righteous here mentioned, is oppoſed to the *wicked* mentioned in the context: As ſurely then as the word *wicked* means *there* one *really*-wicked, ſo does the word *righteous* mean *here* one *truly*-righteous. (2) The righteous man's turning from his righteouſneſs, is oppoſed to the wicked man's turning from his iniquity: If therefore the righteous man's righteouſneſs is to be underſtood of *feigned* goodneſs, ſo the wicked man's iniquity muſt be underſtood of *feigned* iniquity. (3) The crime of the righteous man here ſpoken of, is *turning from his righteouſneſs*; but if his righteouſneſs were only an hypocritical righteouſneſs, he would rather deſerve to be commended for renouncing it; a wicked, ſly phariſee, being more odious to God than a barefaced ſinner, who has honeſty enough not to put on the maſk of religion, Rev. iii. 15.---(4) Part of this apoſtate's *puniſhment* will conſiſt in NOT having *the righteouſneſs that he has done remembered:* but if his righteouſneſs is a falſe righteouſneſs, or meer hypocriſy, the divine *threatening* proves a precious *promiſe*: for

his ſin, and his righteouſneſs, which he has done, ſhall not be remembered." Ezek. iii. 20. Again, "When the righteous, &c. does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, ſhall he live? All his righteouſneſs, that he has done, ſhall not be mentioned; in his treſpaſs that he hath treſpaſſed, and in his ſin that he hath ſinned, in them ſhall he DIE." Ezek. xviii. 24. Once more: "The righteouſneſs of the righteous ſhall not deliver him in the day of his tranſgreſſion, &c. When I ſay to the righteous, that he ſhall ſurely live; † if he truſt to his righteouſneſs, and commit iniquity he ſhall die for it." Ezek. xxxiii. 13.

It ſeems, that God foreſeeing the Solifidians would be hard of belief, notwithſtanding the great ado they make about faith, condeſcended to their infirmity, and kindly ſpoke the ſame thing over and over; for ſetting again the broad ſeal of heaven to the truth that chiefly guards the ſecond goſpel-axiom, he ſays for the fourth time, "When the righteous turneth from his righteouſneſs, and committeth iniquity, he ſhall even DIE thereby: But if the wicked turns from his wickedneſs, and DOTH that which is lawful and right, he ſhall LIVE thereby." Ezek. xxxiii. 18, 19.

If Ezekiel is not allowed to be a competent judge, let Chriſt himſelf be heard: "Then his Lord ſaid unto him: O thou wicked ſervant, I forgave thee all that debt, &c. Shouldeſt not thou alſo have had compaſſion on thy fellow ſervant, even as I had pity on thee? And his Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors." Mat. xviii. 26, &c.

All the preceding ſcriptures are thus ſummed up by our Lord, Mat. xxv. 46, "Theſe [the perſons who have not finally done the works of faith] ſhall go into

for you cannot pleaſe an hypocrite better, than by aſſuring him, that his hypocriſy ſhall never be remembered. What a pity is it, that, to defend our miſtakes, we ſhould fix egregious nonſenſe, and groſs contradiction upon the only wiſe God?

† Theſe words are another indubitable proof, that *the righteous* here mentioned is a truly-righteous perſon; as the holy and true God would never ſay to a wicked phariſee, that *he ſhall ſurely live.*

everlaſting

everlasting punishment; but the righteous [those who have done them to the end, at least from the time of their re-conversion, if they were backsliders] shall go into eternal life." This doctrine agrees perfectly with the conclusion of the sermon on the Mount: "Whosoever *heareth* these sayings of mine, and *doeth them*; I will liken him to a *wise* man, who built his house upon a rock; and every one that *heareth* these sayings of mine, and *doeth them not*, shall be likened unto a *foolish* man, who built his house upon the sand."---Nay, this is Christ's explicit doctrine: No words can be plainer than these: "They that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth; they that have *done good*, unto the resurrection of *life*; and they that have *done evil*, unto the resurrection of *condemnation*," John v. 29. All creeds therefore, like that of St. Athanasius, and all faith, must end in practice. This is a grand article of what might, with peculiar propriety, be called *the Catholic Faith*,---the faith that is common to, and essential under all the dispensations of the everlasting gospel, in all countries and ages;---"the faith, which except a man believe faithfully," i. e. so as to work righteousness like the good and faithful servant, "he cannot be saved."

Second Part.

As some difficulties probably rise in the Reader's mind against the preceding doctrine, it may not be amiss to produce them in the form of Objections, and to answer them more fully than I have yet done.

I. Objection. "You confound our *title* to, with our *meetness* for heaven, two things which we carefully distinguish. Our *title* to heaven being solely what Christ has done and suffered for his people, has nothing to do with either our holiness or good works; but, our *meetness* for heaven supposes holiness, if not good works. Therefore, God's unconverted sinful people, who have in Christ a complete *title* to heaven by right of "finished salvation," *shall* all be made *meet* for heaven *in the day of his power*."

Ans.

ANS. 1. I underſtand you, and ſo does Mr. Fulſome. You inſinuate, that till *the day* you ſpeak of comes, unconverted ſinners, and backſliders, may indulge themſelves like the ſervant mentioned in the goſpel, who ſaid, "My maſter delayeth his coming, and began to drink with the drunken;" but alas! inſtead of "a day of power," he ſaw a day of vengeance, and his "finiſhed ſalvation" (ſo called) ended in weeping, wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth.

2. Your diſtinction is contrary to the Scriptures, which repreſent ALL impenitent workers of iniquity as having a *full title to hell*, according to both law and goſpel; ſo far are the oracles of God from ſuppoſing, that ſome workers of iniquity have a *full title to heaven*, abſolutely independent on the obedience of faith.

3. It is contrary to *Reaſon*; for reaſon dictates that whoſoever has a full *Title* to a *puniſhment* or to a *reward*, is fully *meet* for it. Where is the difference between ſaying a murderer *is fully meet for*, or that he *has a full title to* the gallows? If a palace richly furniſhed was beſtowed upon the moſt righteous man in the kingdom, and you were the perſon: would it not be abſurd to diſtinguiſh between your *title to*, and your *meetneſs for* that RECOMPENCE? Or, if the king, in conſequence of a valuable conſideration received from the prince, had promiſed a coronet to every ſwift runner in England, next to the prince's interpoſition and his majeſty's promiſe, would not your running well be at once your *title* to, and *meetneſs* for that honour? And is not this the caſe, with reſpect to the incorruptible crowns reſerved in heaven for thoſe, who *ſo run that* they *may obtain?*

4. Your diſtinction draws after it the moſt horrid conſequences: for if a *full title* to heaven may be ſeparated from a *meetneſs* for the *loweſt* place in heaven, it neceſſarily follows, That Solomon had a *full title* to heaven when he worſhipped Aſhtaroth; and the inceſtuous Corinthian, when he defiled his father's bed; in flat oppoſition to the dictates of every man's conſcience [if you except Mr. Fulſome and his fraternity.]

ternity.] It follows, that St. Paul told a groſs untruth, when he ſaid, "This ye know, that NO idolator, and NO unclean perſon, hath ANY inheritance in the kingdom of Chriſt and of God."—In a word, it follows, that believers ſanctified with the blood of the covenant, who draw back to perdition, [ſuch as the apoſtates mentioned, Heb. x. 29.] may have no title to heaven in all their ſanctifying faith; while ſome impenitent murderers, like David and Manaſſes, have a perfect title to it in all their crimes and unbelief.

5. This is not all: Our Lord's mark, *By their fruit ye ſhall know them*, is abſolutely wrong, if you are right: for your diſtinction aboliſhes the grand characteriſtic of the children of God, and thoſe of the devil, which conſiſts in *not committing* or *committing iniquity*, in *doing* or *not doing* righteouſneſs, according to theſe plain words of St. John, "He that committeth ſin is of the devil,"---"in this the children of God are manifeſt, and the children of the devil: whoſoever *does not* righteouſneſs, is *not* of God, neither he that loveth not (much leſs he that murders) his brother," 1 John iii. 8, 10.---Thus the Lord's ſacred encloſure is broken down, his ſheepfold becomes a fold for goats, a dog-kennel, a ſwine ſty.---Nay, for what you know, all bloody adulterers may be ſheep in wolves cloathing; while all thoſe that have eſcaped the pollution that is in the world, may only be wolves in ſheep's cloathing: it mattering not, with regard to the goodneſs of our title to heaven, whether filthineſs to Belial, or holineſs to the Lord, be written upon our foreheads. O Sir, how much more dangerous is your ſcheme, than that of the primitive Babel-builders! They only brought on a confuſion of the original language; but your doctrine confounds light and darkneſs, promiſes and threatenings, the heirs of heaven and thoſe of hell, the ſeed of the woman and that of the ſerpent.

6. As to your intimation, that holineſs is ſecured by teaching, that God's people *ſhall* abſolutely be made willing to forſake their ſins, and to become

righteous *in the day of God's power*, that ſo they may have a *meetneſs for*, as well as a *title to* heaven; it drags after it this horrid conſequence: The devil's people "in the day of God's power," *ſhall* abſolutely be made willing to forſake their righteouſneſs, that they may have a *meetneſs for*, as well as a *title to* hell: a bitter reverſe this of your "*ſweet Goſpel!*"

To conclude: If by your diſtinction you only want to inſinuate, that Chriſt is the grand, and properly-meritorious procurer of our ſalvation from firſt to laſt: and that the works of faith are only a ſecondary, inſtrumental, evidencing cauſe of our *final* ſalvation, you mean juſt as I do. But if you give the world to underſtand, that election to eternal glory is *unconditional*, or, which comes all to one, that *no ſin* can invalidate our title to heaven; from the preceding obſervations it appears, that you deceive the ſimple, make Chriſt the miniſter of ſin, and inadvertently poiſon the Church with the rankeſt Antinomianiſm.

II. Obj. "You call the *works of Chriſt* the *primary*, and properly meritorious cauſe, and *our works of faith* the *ſecondary* and inſtrumental cauſe of our *eternal* ſalvation. But according to your doctrine, *our* works ſhould be called the *firſt* cauſe, and *Chriſt's* work the *ſecond*; for you make the final ſucceſs of *Chriſt's* work, to depend upon *our* work; which is manifeſtly ſetting our performances above thoſe of the Redeemer."

* Answer: 1. When a gardener affirms, that he ſhall have no crop unleſs he digs and ſets his garden, does he manifeſtly ſet his work above that of the God of Nature? And when we ſay, that "we ſhall not reap *final* ſalvation, if we do not work out our ſalvation," do we exalt ourſelves above the God of Grace?

2. Whether our free-agency turns the ſcale for life or death, to all eternity Chriſt will have the honour of having died to beſtow an *initial life* of grace even upon thoſe, who chuſe death in the error of their ways, and to have made them gracious and ſincere offers of an eternal life of glory. In this ſenſe then,

Chriſt's

Chriſt's work cannot be rendered ineffectual; it being his abſolute decree, that the word of his grace ſhall be the ſavour of life to obedient free-agents, and the ſavour of death to the diſobedient. Therefore, if we will not have the eternal benefit of his redeeming work, we cannot take from him the eternal honour of having ſhed his blood even for thoſe, who tread it under foot, and who "bring upon themſelves ſwift *Deſtruction* by denying the Lord that *bought them.*"

* 3. Chriſt is not diſhonoured by the doctrine that repreſents the effect of the greater wheel, as being thus in part ſuſpended upon the turning of the leſs. The light of the ſun ſhines in vain for me, if I ſhut my eyes. Life is a far nobler gift than food; I can give my ſtarving neighbour bread, but I cannot give him life: Nevertheleſs, the higher wheel ſtops, if the inferior is quite at a ſtand; he muſt die if he has no nouriſhment. Thus, by God's appointment, the preſervation of all the firſt-born of the Iſraelites in Egypt, depended upon the ſprinkling of a Lamb's blood; the life of all them that were bitten by the fiery ſerpents, was ſuſpended on a look towards the brazen ſerpent; and that of Rahab and her friends hung, if I may ſo ſpeak, on a ſcarlet thread.---Now, if God did not diſhonour his wiſdom, when he made the life of ſo many people to depend upon thoſe ſeemingly inſignificant works; and if he continues to make the life of all mankind depend upon breathing; is it reaſonable to ſay, that he is diſhonoured by his own doctrine, which ſuſpends our eternal ſalvation upon the works of faith?

4. To conclude: Mr. Madan, in the above-quoted ſermon, p. 16, ſays with great truth; "Chriſt and faith are not one and the ſame thing; how then can we reconcile the apoſtle with himſelf, when he ſays in one place, *We are juſtified by Chriſt*; and in another, we are *juſtified by faith?* This can only be done by having recourſe to the plain diſtinction, which the ſcriptures afford us, in conſidering Chriſt as the meritorious cauſe, and faith as the inſtrumental cauſe, or that by which the meritorious cauſe is ap-

plied unto us, ſo that we are benefited thereby." Now all our hereſy conſiſts in applying Mr. M's judicious reaſoning to all the ſcriptures, that guard the ſecond goſpel axiom, thus: "How can we reconcile the apoſtle with himſelf, when he ſays in one place, We are ſaved by Chriſt, and in other places, We are ſaved by faith, we are ſaved by hope:—— Work out your own ſalvation:---Confeſſion is made to ſalvation, &c. For Chriſt and faith, Chriſt and hope, Chriſt and works, Chriſt and making confeſſion, are not one and the ſame thing? This ſeeming inconſiſtency in St. Paul's doctrine vaniſhes by admitting a plain diſtinction, which the ſcriptures afford us: that is, 1. By conſidering Chriſt, from firſt to laſt, as the properly-meritorious Cauſe of our preſent and eternal ſalvation: 2. By conſidering faith as the inſtrumental Cauſe of our ſalvation from the guilt and pollution of ſin on earth: And 3. by conſidering the works of faith, not only as the evidencing Cauſe of our juſtification in the great day, but alſo as an inſtrumental Cauſe of our continuing in the life of faith; juſt as eating, drinking, breathing, and ſuch works, that ſpring from natural life, are inſtrumental Cauſes of our continuing in natural life." Thus faith, and its works, are two inferior Cauſes, whereby the properly-meritorious Cauſe is ſo completely applied to obedient, perſevering believers, that they are now, and for ever ſhall be, benefited by it.

III. Obj. "Though you aſſert, that, from firſt to laſt, the works and ſufferings of Chriſt are the grand, and properly-meritorious Cauſe of our ſalvation; yet, according to your ſcheme, man having a life of glory upon his choice, and heaven upon working out his ſalvation, the honour of free grace is not ſecured. For, after all, free-will and human faithfulneſs, or unfaithfulneſs, turn the ſcale for eternal ſalvation or damnation.

* Ans. 1. In the very nature of things we are free-agents, or the wiſe and righteous God would act inconſiſtently with his wiſdom and equity in diſpenſing rewards and puniſhments. If, through the ſaving

grace

grace of God which has appeared to all men, we were not again endued with an awful power to chuſe life, and to be faithful, it would be as injudicious to puniſh or recompenſe mankind, as to whip a dead horſe for not moving, damn fire for burning, or grant water an eternal reward for its fluidity. 2. Were I aſhamed of my moral free-agency, I ſhouſd be aſhamed of the noble power that diſtinguiſhes me from the brute creation.——I ſhould be aſhamed of the Old Teſtament, and of Moſes, who ſays: "Behold, I call heaven and earth to record, that I have ſet before you life and death, bleſſing and curſing, therefore *chuſe* life."—I ſhould be aſhamed of the New Teſtament, and of Chriſt, who complains, "You *will not* come unto me that you might have life," i. e. You will not uſe the power, which my preventing grace has given you, that you might live here a life of faith and holineſs, and be hereafter *rewarded* with a life of happineſs and glory:——In a word, I ſhould give up the ſecond goſpel-axiom, and tacitly reproach my Maker, who ſays; "Why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael? for I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth; wherefore turn yourſelves, and live ye."

* 3. To convince you, that *free-agency*, and a right uſe of it, are by no means inconſiſtent with divine grace and genuine humility, I aſk, Did not God endue our firſt parents with *free will?* Are not even ſome rigid Calviniſts aſhamed to deny it? If free will in man is a power diſhonourable to God, did not our wiſe Creator miſtake when he pronounced man very good, at the very time that man was a free-willer? For, how could man be very good, if he had within him a power that neceſſarily militates againſt the honour of God, as the Calviniſts affirm free-will does?

* 4. I go one ſtep farther and aſk, Did God ever endue *one child of Adam* with power to avoid one ſin? —If you ſay, No: you contradict the ſcriptures, your own conſcience, and the conſciences of all mankind; you fix the blot of folly on all the judges, who have judicially puniſhed malefactors with death; and, when you inſinuate, that the Lawgiver of the univerſe will

ſend all workers of iniquity into hell, for not "doing what is lawful and right to ſave their ſouls alive;" or for not avoiding ſin, when he never gave them the leaſt power perſonally ſo to do; you pour almoſt as much contempt upon his perfections, as if you ſaid, that he will one day raiſe all creeping inſects, to judge them according to their ſteps, and to caſt into a place of torment as many as did not move as ſwiftly as a race horſe!

* If you anſwer in the affirmative, that God has graciouſly endued one child of Adam with power to avoid one ſin, ſo far you hold free will, as well as Moſes and Jeſus Chriſt. Now if God has beſtowed free will upon one child of Adam, with reſpect to the avoiding of one ſin; why not upon two, with reſpect to the avoiding of two ſins? Why not upon all, with reſpect to the avoiding of all the ſins, that are incompatible with the obedience of faith?

5. Again, as it would be abſurd to ſay, that God gave a power to avoid one ſin, only to one child of Adam: ſo it would be impious to ſuppoſe, God gave him this power, that, in caſe he faithfully uſed it, he ſhould neceſſarily boaſt of it. Phariſaic boaſting is then by no means the neceſſary conſequence of our moral liberty, or of a proper uſe of our free-will. Thus it appears, that your ſpecious objection is founded upon an heap of paradoxes; and that to embrace free wrath, leſt we ſhould not make enough of free grace, and to jump into fataliſm, leſt we would be proud of our free-will, is not leſs abſurd than to run to an houſe of ill fame, leſt we ſhould be proud of our chaſtity.

* 6. Our doctrine ſecures the honour of free grace as well as Calviniſm. You will be convinced of it, if you conſider the following articles of our creed with reſpect to free grace. 1. Before the Fall, the free grace of our Creator gave us in Adam holineſs, happineſs, and a power to continue in both. 2. Since the Fall, the free grace of our Redeemer indulges us with a reprieve, an accepted time, a day of viſitation and ſalvation; in a word, with a better covenant,

venant, and a "free gift, that is come upon all men unto [initial] juſtification of life, Rom. v. 18. 3. That nothing may be wanting on God's part, the free grace of our Sanctifier excites us to make a proper uſe of the free gift, part of which is moral liberty. 4. Thus, even our free will to good is all of creating, redeeming, and ſanctifying grace: therefore, with regard to that glorious power, as well as to every other talent, we humbly aſk with St. Paul, "What haſt thou, that thou haſt not received?" 5. This is not all: we are commanded to account the long-ſuffering of God [a degree of] *ſalvation*; and ſo it is: for without forcing, or neceſſarily inclining our will, God's providential free grace diſpoſes a thouſand circumſtances in ſuch a manner, as to ſecond the calls of the everlaſting goſpel. The gracious Preſerver of men works daily a thouſand wonders to keep us out of the grave, and out of hell: a thouſand wheels have turned ten thouſand times in and out of the church, to bring us the pureſt ſtreams of goſpel truth. Countleſs breathings of the ſpirit of grace add virtue to thoſe ſtreams; free grace therefore not only prevents, but alſo in numberleſs ways accompanies, follows, directs, encourages, and aſſiſts us in all the work of our ſalvation.

* And yet, while God thus works in us, as the God of all grace, both to will and to do of his good pleaſure; that is, while he thus gives us the faculty to will, and the power to do; and while he ſecretly by his Spirit, and publicly by his miniſters and providences, excites us to make a proper uſe of that faculty and power; yet, as the God of wiſdom, holineſs, and juſtice, he leaves the act to our choice; thus treating us as rational creatures, whom he intends wiſely to reward or juſtly to puniſh *according to their* works, and not according to *his own*.

* Hence it appears, that we go every ſtep of the way with our Calviniſt brethren, while they exalt Chriſt and free grace in a rational and ſcriptural manner; and that we refuſe to follow them only when they ſet Chriſt at nought as a Prophet, a Lawgiver, a Judge,

Judge, and a King; under pretence of extolling him as a prieſt; or when they put wanton free grace, and unrelenting free-wrath, in the place of the genuine free-grace teſtified of in the ſcriptures.

IV. OBJ. "One more difficulty remains: if I freely obey the goſpel and am ſaved; and if my neighbour freely diſobeys it, and is damned, what makes me to differ from him? Is it not my free obedience of faith?"

* ANS. Undoubtedly: and his free diſobedience makes him differ from you: or it would be very abſurd *judicially*, to acquit and reward you rather than him, according to *your* works. And it would be ſtrange duplicity to condemn and puniſh *him*, rather than you, in a day of judgment, after the moſt ſolemn proteſtations, that equity and impartiality ſhall dictate the Judge's ſentence.

* As to the difficulty ariſing from St. Paul's queſtion, 1 Cor. iv. 7. "Who maketh thee to differ? To what I have ſaid about it in the preceding ſermon, I add: 1. According to the covenant of works, "all fall ſhort of the glory of God:" and when any one aſks, with reſpect to the law of innocence, "Who makes thee to differ?" The proper anſwer is, "There is no difference: every mouth muſt be ſtopped: all the world is guilty before God:" "Enter not into judgment with thy ſervant, O Lord." But, according to the covenant of grace, he that freely believes and obeys in the ſtrength of free grace, undoubtedly makes himſelf to differ from him, that by obſtinate diſobedience does deſpite to the ſpirit of grace. If this point is given up, the Diana and the Apollo, or rather the Apollyon of the Antinomians [I mean wanton free-grace and mercileſs free-wrath] are ſet up for ever. However,

2. If the queſtion, *Who maketh thee to differ?* Is aſked with reſpect to the *number* of our talents, the proper anſwer is, "God's diſtinguiſhing grace alone maketh us to differ." And that this is the ſenſe, which the apoſtle had in view, is evident from the context. He had before reproved the Corinthians for

for *faying every one, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos*, &c. and now he adds, "Thefe things I have in a figure transferred to myfelf and to Apollos, that ye might learn in us not to think [of gifted, popular men, or of yourfelves] above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up one againft another; for who maketh thee to differ?" Why is thy perfon graceful? And why art thou naturally an eloquent man like Apollos, whilft thy brother's fpeech is rude, and his bodily prefence weak and contemptible like mine? But,

* 3. If you afk, *Who maketh thee to differ*, with refpect to the *improvement* or *non-improvement* of our gifts and graces? if you enquire, whether God neceffitates fome to difbelieve, that they may neceffarily fin and be damned; while he neceffitates others to believe, that they may neceffarily work righteoufnefs and be faved; I utterly deny the laft affertion; and in this fenfe St. Paul anfwers his own mifapplied queftion thus, Be not deceived: what a man (not what God) foweth, that fhall he alfo reap, perdition if he foweth to the flefh, and eternal life if he fowe h to the fpirit. Nor am I either afraid or afhamed to fecond him by faying upon the walls of Jerufalem, that in the laft-mentioned fenfe, We make *ourfelves* to differ. And fcripture, reafon, confcience, the divine perfections, and the trumpet of God, which will foon fummon us to judgment, teftify, that this reply ftands as firm as one half of the Bible, and the fecond gofpel-axiom, on which it is immoveably founded.

* Nay, there is not a promife or a threatning in the Bible, that is not a proof of our Lawgiver's want of wifdom, or of our Judge's want of equity, if we are not graciouſly endued with a capacity to make ourfelves differ from the obftinate violators of the law, and defpifers of the gofpel;—that is, if we are not free agents. There is not an exhortation, a warning, or an entreaty in the facred pages, that is not a demonftration of the pen-man's folly, or of the freedom of our will. In a word, there is not a finner

juſtly

juſtly puniſhed in hell, or a believer wiſely rewarded in heaven, that does not indirectly ſay to all the world of rationals: "Though the God of grace draws thee to obedience; yet it is with the bands of a man. For, after all, he leaves thee in the hand of thy counſel, to keep the commandments, and perform acceptable obedience *if thou wilt*. Before man is life and death, and whether him liketh, ſhall be given him." Eccleſ. xv. 14, &c.

* But, although your obedience of faith makes you to differ from your condemned neighbour, you have no reaſon to reject the firſt goſpel-axiom, and to indulge a *boaſting* † contrary to faith and free grace: for your Chriſtian faith, which is the root of your obedience, is peculiarly the Gift of God; whether you conſider it as to its precious *Seed* (the word nigh:) as to its glorious *Object* (Chriſt and the truth:) as to the *Means*, by which that object is revealed (ſuch as preaching and hearing:) as to the *Opportunities* and *Faculties* of uſing thoſe means (ſuch as life, reaſon,

† There is a twofold *glorying*; the one Phariſaic and contrary to faith; of this St. Paul ſpeaks, where he ſays, BOASTING *is excluded, &c. by the law of faith*, Rom, iii. 27. The other, evangelical and agreeable faith; ſince it is a believer's holy triumph in God, reſulting from the teſtimony of a good conſcience. Concerning it the Apoſtle ſays, *Let every man prove his own work, and then ſhall he have rejoicing* (BOASTING) *in himſelf alone, and not in another*, Gal. vi. 4. (The word in the original is *Kaucheſis* in one paſſage, and *Kauchema* in the other.) Theſe ſeemingly contrary doctrines are highly conſiſtent; their oppoſition anſwering to that of the goſpel-axioms. The firſt axiom allows of no glorying but in Chriſt, who has alone fulfilled the *law of works*, or the terms of the *firſt* covenant: But the ſecond axiom allows obedient believers an humble *Kauchema*, upon their perſonally fulfilling the *law of faith*, or the gracious terms of the *ſecond* covenant. 2 Cor. i. 12. This Kauchema anſwers to what St. Paul calls the *witneſs* of *our own ſpirit*, or *the teſtimony of a good conſcience*; which, next to the witneſs of the word and ſpirit concerning God's mercy and Chriſt's blood, is the ground of a Chriſtian's confidence. *Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God, &c. becauſe we keep his commandments.* 1 John iii. 21, 22. And yet, aſtoniſhing! this bleſſed *Kauchema*, ſo ſtrongly recommended by St. Paul and St. John, who, one would think, knew ſomething of the goſpel, is now repreſented by ſome evangeliſts, as the quinteſſence of Phariſaiſm!

&c.) or

&c.) or as to the *Spirit of Grace*, whose assistance in this case is so important, that he is called the *Spirit of Faith*.—And yet that spirit does not act irresistibly; all believers freely yielding to it; and all unbelievers freely resisting it; so far only does the matter turn upon free will. Thus it appears, that although the act of faith is ours, we are so much indebted to free grace for it, that believers can no more boast of being their own saviours, because they daily believe and work in order to their final salvation; than they can boast of being their own preservers, because they daily breathe, and eat, in order to their continued preservation.

On the other hand, although your condemned neighbour's disobedience makes him differ from you, he has no reason to reject the second gospel-axiom, and to exculpate himself by charging heaven with capricious partiality and horrid free-wrath; because God, whose mercy is over all his works, and who is no respecter of persons, graciously bestowed a talent of free grace upon him as well as upon you, according to one or another of the divine dispensations: for the royal master, mentioned in the gospel, gave a pound to the servant that buried it, as well as to him that gained ten pounds by occupying till his Lord came.

* "But, upon that footing, what becomes of *distinguishing Grace?*" If by distinguishing grace you mean calvinistic partiality, I answer, It must undoubtedly sink together with its inseparable partner, unconditional reprobation, into the pit of error whence they ascended to fill the church with contentions, and the world with infidels. But if you mean *scriptural* distinguishing grace, that is, the manifold wisdom of God, which makes him proceed gradually, and admit a pleasing variety in the works of grace, as well as in the productions of nature;—if you mean his good pleasure to give the Heathens one talent, the Jews two, the papists three, the protestants four: or if you mean the different methods, which he uses to call sinners to repentance, such as his familiar expostulation with Cain;—his wonderful warning of Lot's sons-in-

law;

law ;—his rouſing king Saul by the voice of Samuel, and Saul of Tarſus by the voice of Chriſt ; [Samuel and Chriſt coming from the inviſible world for that awful purpoſe]—His audibly inviting Judas, and the rich ruler, to follow him, promiſing the latter heavenly treaſure, if he would give his earthly poſſeſſions to the poor :—His ſhocking by preternatural earthquakes the conſciences of the Philippian jailor, and the two malefactors that ſuffered with him. If you mean this, by *diſtinguiſhing* grace, we are agreed : for, grace diſplayed in as diſtinguiſhing a manner as it was towards Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethſaida, greatly illuſtrates our Lord's doctrine : " Of him to whom little is given, little ſhall be required ; but much ſhall be required of them, that have received much ; " the equality of God's ways not conſiſting in giving to all men a like number of talents, any more than making them all archangels ; but in treating them equally, according to the various editions of the everlaſting goſpel, or law of liberty ; and according to the good or bad uſes they have made of their talents, whether they had few or many.

* To return to your grand objection : You ſuppoſe (and this is probably the ground of your miſtake) that when a deliverance, or a divine favour turns upon ſome thing, which we may do, or leave undone at our option, God is neceſſarily robbed of his glory. But a few queries will eaſily convince you of your miſtake. When God had been merciful to Lot and his family, not looking back made all the difference between him and his wife ; but does it follow, that he claimed the honour of his narrow eſcape ? Looking at the brazen type of Chriſt made ſome Iſraelites differ from others, that died of the bite of the fiery ſerpents ; but is this a ſufficient reaſon to conclude, that the healed men had not ſenſe to diſtinguiſh between *primary* and *ſecondary* cauſes, and that they aſcribed to their looks the glory due to God, for graciouſly contriving the means of their cure ?---One of your neighbours has hanged, and another has poiſoned himſelf ; ſo that not hanging yourſelf, and taking wholeſome

wholesome food has so far made the difference between you and them: but can you reasonably infer, that you do not live by divine bounty, and that I rob the Preserver of men of his glory, when I affirm, that you shall surely die if you do not eat, or if you take poison?

Permit me to make you sensible of your mistake by one more illustration. An anti-Calvinist, who observes that God has suspended many of his blessings upon industry, diligently ploughs, sows, and weeds his field. A fatalist over the way, lest free grace should not have all the glory of his crop, does not turn † one clod, and expects seed to drop from the clouds into furrows made by an invisible plough on a certain day, which he calls "a day of God's power." When harvest comes, the one has a crop of wheat, and the other a crop of weeds. Now although industry alone has made the difference between the two fields; who is most likely to give God the glory of a crop, the solifidian farmer who reaps thistles? or the laborious husbandman, who has joined works to his faith in divine Providence, and joyfully brings his sheaves home; saying as St. Paul, By divine bounty I have planted, and Apollos has weeded, but God has given the increase, which is all in all?

Third Part.

Flattering myself, that the preceding answers have removed the reader's prejudices, or confirmed him in his attachment to genuine free grace, which stands at an equal distance from wantonness and free wrath; I shall conclude this Essay by some reflections upon the pride, or prejudices of those who scruple working with an eye to the rewards, that God offers to promote the obedience of faith.

† This is not spoken of *pious* Calvinists, for some of them are remarkably diligent in good works. They are *Solifidians* by halves—in principle, but not in practice. Their works outshine their errors. I lay nothing to their charge but inattention, prejudice, and glaring inconsistency.

" If heaven, [ſay ſuch miſtaken perſons] if the enjoyment of God in glory, is the reward of obedience; and if you work with an eye to that reward, you act from ſelf, the baſeſt of all motives. Love, and not ſelf-intereſt, ſets us, true believers, upon action: We work *from gratitude*, † and not for profit; *from life*, and not for life. To do good with an eye to a reward, though that reward ſhould be a crown of life, is to act as a mercenary wretch, and not as a duteous child, or a faithful ſervant."

The ſpecious error, zealouſly propagated by Molinos, Madam Guion, and her illuſtrious convert, archbiſhop Fenelon [though afterwards renounced by him] put a ſtop to a great revival of the power of godlineſs abroad in the laſt century; and it has already ſtruck a fatal blow at the late revival in theſe kingdoms. I reverence and love many that contend for this ſentiment; but, my regard for truth overbalancing my reſpect for them, I think it my duty to oppoſe their miſtake, as a pernicious refinement of Satan transformed into an angel of light: I therefore attack it by the following arguments.

1. This doctrine ſets aſide at a ſtroke a conſiderable part of the Bible, which conſiſts in *threatnings* to deter evil workers, and in *promiſes* to encourage obedient believers: For, if it is baſe to obey, in order to obtain a promiſed reward, it is baſer ſtill to do it in order to avoid a threatened puniſhment. Thus the precious grace of faith, ſo far as it is exerciſed about divine promiſes and threatenings, is indirectly made void.

2. It decries godly fear, a grand ſpring of action, and preſervative of holineſs in all free agents, that

† The reader is deſired to obſerve, that we recommend working *from life* and *gratitude*, as well as our opponents. Life and thankfulneſs, are *two* important ſprings of action, which we uſe as well as they. But thankfulneſs and life, are not *all* the ſprings neceſſary, in our imperfect ſtate, to move *all* the wheels of obedience; and we dare no more exclude *the other* ſprings, becauſe we have theſe two; than we dare cut off three of our fingers, becauſe we have a little finger and a thumb.

are

are in a ſtate of probation; and by this means it indirectly charges God with want of wiſdom, for putting that ſpring in the breaſt of innocent man in paradiſe, and for perpetually working upon it in his word and by his Spirit, whom St. Paul calls *the ſpirit of bondage unto fear*; becauſe he helps us to believe the threatenings denounced againſt the workers of iniquity, and to fear leſt ruin ſhould overtake us, if we continue in our ſins.

If ever there was a viſible Church without ſpot and wrinkle, it was when "the multitude of them that believed, were of one heart and of one ſoul." The worldly-mindedneſs of Ananias and Sapphira was the firſt blemiſh of the Chriſtian, as Achan's covetouſneſs had been of the Jewiſh Church on this ſide Jordan. God made an example of them as he had done of Achan, and St. Luke obſerves, that upon it, *Great fear* came upon *all the church*; even ſuch fear as kept them from *falling after the ſame example of unbelief*. Now were all the primitive Chriſtians mean ſpirited people, becauſe they were filled with great fear of being puniſhed as the firſt backſliders if they apoſtatized? Is it a reproach to righteous Noah, that "Being moved with *fear* he prepared an ark for the *ſaving* of his houſe?" And did our Lord legalize the goſpel, when "he began to ſay to his diſciples firſt of all, &c. I ſay unto you, *my Friends*, be not afraid of them that kill the body, &c. but *fear* him, who, after he hath killed, hath power to caſt into hell; yea, I ſay unto *you*, fear him?"—Does this mean: Be mercenary: Yea, I ſay unto *you*, be mercenary?

3. *Hope* has a particular reference to the *Promiſes*, and *good things* to come. Excellent things are ſpoken of that grace: If St. Paul ſays, Ye are ſaved thro' *Faith*, he ſays alſo, We are ſaved by *Hope*. Hence St. Peter obſerves, that "exceeding great *promiſes* are given unto us, that we might be partakers of the divine nature;" And St. John declares, "Every man that hath this *hope* in him, purifieth himſelf even as God is pure." Now hope never ſtirs, but in order to obtain good things in view: a motive this, which

our goſpel-refiners repreſent as illiberal and baſe. Their ſcheme therefore, directly tends to ridicule and ſuppreſs the capital, Chriſtian grace, which Faith guards on the left hand, and Charity on the right.

4. God ſays to Abraham, and in him to all believers, "I am thy exceeding great *Reward:*" Hence it follows, that the higher we riſe in holineſs and obedience, the nearer we ſhall be admitted to the eternal throne; and the fuller enjoyment we ſhall have of our God and Saviour, our Reward and Rewarder. Therefore, to overlook divine rewards, is to overlook God himſelf, who is our great *Reward*; and to ſlight the life to come, of which godlineſs has the *Promiſe*.

5. This error, I ſuppoſe, may be put in a ſtill ſtronger light. Not to ſtrive to obtain our great reward in full, amounts to ſaying: "Lord, thou art beneath my aim and purſuit: I can do without thee, or without ſo much of thee. I will not beſtir myſelf, and do one thing to obtain either the fruition, or a fuller enjoyment of thy adorable ſelf."

* *Wo to him that ſtriveth* in generoſity *with his Maker! Let the potſherd ſtrive* thus *with the potſherds of the earth*; but let not *the clay ſay to him that faſhioneth it*, "What doeſt thou, when thou ſtirreſt me up to good works by the promiſe of thy rewards? Surely, Lord, thou forgetteſt, that the nobleneſs of my mind, and my doctrine of finiſhed ſalvation, make me above running for a reward, though it ſhould be a life of glory, and Thyſelf. Whatever I do at thy command, I am determined not to demean myſelf; I will do it as Araunah, like a king." What depths of Antinomian pride may be hid under the covering of our voluntary humility!

6. The Calviniſts of the laſt century, in their lucid intervals, ſaw the abſolute neceſſity of working for heaven and heavenly rewards. We have a good, practical diſcourſe of John Bunyan upon theſe words, "So run that you may obtain." The burden of it is, "If you will have heaven, you muſt run for it." Whence he calls his ſermon, "*The heavenly footman.*"

And

And Matthew Mead, a ſtaunch Calviniſt, in his treatiſe on *The good of early obedience*, p. 429, ſays with great truth: "Maintain an holy, filial fear of God: This is an excellent preſervative againſt apoſtacy. *By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil*, ſays Solomon; and he tells you, "The fear of the Lord is the fountain of *life*, whereby men depart from the ſnares of *death*;" and backſliding from Chriſt is one of the great ſnares of death. Think much of the day of recompence, and of the glorious reward of perſeverance in that day: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." It is not thoſe that begin well, but thoſe who end well, that receive the crown. It is not mercenary ſervice to quicken ourſelves to the obedience by the hope of a recompence. *Omnis amor mercedis non eſt mercenarius, &c.* David ſaid, "I have hoped for thy ſalvation, and done thy commandments." He encouraged himſelf to duty by the hope of glory, &c. Hope of that glorious recompence is of great ſervice to quicken us to perſeverance. And to the ſame end does the apoſtle urge it: "Be unmoveable, alway abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

7. When voluntary humility has made us wiſe above what is written by the apoſtles, and by our forefathers, it will make us look down with contempt from the top of our fancied orthodoxy, upon the motives, by which the prophets took up their croſs, to ſerve God and their generation. When St. Paul enumerates the works of Moſes, he traces them back to their noble principle, faith working by a well-ordered ſelf-love [a love this, which is inſeparable from the love of God and man; the law of liberty binding us to love our neighbour as ourſelves, and God *above* ourſelves] "He choſe, ſays the apoſtle, to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin," &c. But why? Becauſe he was above looking at the prize? Juſt the reverſe: becauſe he had reſpect to the recompence of reward, Heb. xi. 26.

8. In the next chapter, the apoſtle bids us take Chriſt himſelf for our pattern in the very thing, which our goſpel-refiners call mercenary: "Looking to Jeſus, ſays he, who, *for the joy* that was ſet before him, endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at the right hand of the throne of God?" the noble reward this, with which his mediatorial obedience was crowned, as appears from theſe words, "He became *obedient* unto death; *wherefore* God alſo hath highly exalted him." If the ſcheme of thoſe who refine the ancient goſpel appears to me in a peculiarly-unfavourable light, it is when I ſee them impoſe upon the injudicious admirers of unſcriptural humility, and make the ſimple believe, that they do God ſervice when they indirectly repreſent Chriſt's obedience unto death as imperfect, and him as mercenary, actuated by a motive unworthy of a child of God. He ſays, "Every one that is *perfect*, ſhall be *as* his maſter:" but we [ſuch is our conſiſtency!] loudly decry perfection; and yet pretend to an higher degree of it than our Lord and Maſter: For he was not above enduring the croſs, *for the joy* of ſitting down at the right hand of the throne of God: but we are ſo exquiſitely perfect, that we will work gratis. It is mercenary, it is beneath us to work for glory!

9. St. Paul's conduct with reſpect to rewards, was perfectly conſiſtent with his doctrine. I have already obſerved, he wrote to the Corinthians, that he "ſo ran and ſo fought, as to obtain an incorruptible crown;" and it is well known, that in the Olympic games, to which he alludes, all ran or fought with an eye to a prize, a reward, or a crown. But in his epiſtle to the Philippians, he goes ſtill farther; for he repreſents his running for a crown of life, his preſſing after rewards of grace and glory, as the whole of his buſineſs, His words are remarkable: "This *one* thing I *do*; forgetting thoſe things which are behind, and *reaching forth* unto thoſe things which are before, I *preſs* towards the mark, *for the prize* of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus." And when he had

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juſt run his race out, he wrote to Timothy, "I have finiſhed my courſe: henceforth there is laid up for me, (as for a conqueror,) a crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the righteous Judge ſhall give me at that day," the great day of retribution. As for St. John, when he was perfected in love, we find him as "mercenary" as St. Paul; for he writes to the elect Lady, and to her believing children, "Look to yourſelves, that we *loſe not* thoſe things which *we have wrought*, but that we receive a *full reward*."

10. When I read ſuch ſcriptures, I wonder at thoſe, who are ſo wrapt up in the pernicious notion, that we ought not to work for a life of glory; as to overlook even the *crown of life*, with which God will reward thoſe who are *faithful unto death*. And I am aſtoniſhed at the remains of my own unbelief, which prevent my being always raviſhed with admiration at the thought of the rewards offered to fire my ſoul into ſeraphic obedience. An idle country-fellow, who runs at the wake for a wretched prize, labours harder in his ſportive race than, I fear, I do yet in ſome of my prayers and ſermons. A ſportſman, for the pitiful honour of coming in at the death of a fox, toils more than moſt profeſſors do in the purſuit of their corruptions. How ought confuſion to cover our faces! Let thoſe that refine the goſpel, glory in their ſhame: let each of them ſay, "I thank thee, O God, that I am "not like a Papiſt, or like that Arminian, who looks "at the rewards which thou haſt promiſed; I deny "myſelf, and take up my croſs, without thinking of "the joy and rewards ſet before me, &c." For my part, I deſire to humble myſelf before God, for having ſo long overlooked the *exceeding great reward*, and the *crown of life*, promiſed to them that *obey* him: and my thoughts ſhall be expreſſed in ſuch words as theſe.

"Gracious Lord, if he that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, ſhall have a prophet's reward: if our light affliction, when it is patiently endured, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory: if thou haſt ſaid, Do good and lend, hoping

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for nothing again [from man,] and your reward ſhall be great, and ye ſhall be the children of the higheſt: if thou animateſt thoſe, who are perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake, by this promiſſory exhortation, "Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven:" Nay, if a cup of cold water only, given in thy name, ſhall in *no wiſe* loſe its reward; and if the leaſt of thy rewards is a ſmile of approbation; let me be ready to go round the world, ſhouldeſt thou call me to it, that I may obtain ſuch a recompence."

"Since thou haſt ſo cloſely connected holineſs and happineſs, my duty and thy favours; let no man beguile me of my reward by a voluntary humility. And whatſoever my hand findeth to do, help me to do it with my might; not only leſt I loſe my reward, but leſt I have not a full reward; leſt I loſe a beam of the light of thy countenance, or a degree of that peculiar likeneſs and nearneſs to thee, with which thou wilt recompence thoſe, who excel in virtue. So ſhall I equally avoid the deluſion of the Phariſees, who expect heaven thro' their faithleſs works; and the error of the Antinomians, who hope to enter into thy glory without the paſſport of the works of faith."

"And now, O Lord, if thy ſervant has found favour in thy ſight, permit him to urge another requeſt; ſo far as thy wiſdom, and the laws, by which thy free grace works upon free agents, will permit; incline the minds of Papiſts and Proteſtants to receive the truth as it is in Jeſus. Let not eſpecially this plain teſtimony borne to the many great promiſes which thou haſt made, and to the aſtoniſhing *rewards* which thou offereſt them that work righteouſneſs, be rejected by my Calviniſt brethren. Keep them from fighting againſt thy goodneſs, and deſpiſing their own mercies, under pretence of fighting againſt "*Arminian Errors*," and deſpiſing "*Pelagian Checks to the Goſpel.*" And make them ſenſible, that it is abſurd, to decry in word the Pope's pretenſions to infallibility, if by an obſtinate refuſal to "review the whole affair," and to weigh their ſuppoſed orthodoxy in the balances of

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reaſon and revelation, they in fact pretend to be infallible themſelves; and thus, inſtead of one Catholic Pontiff, ſet up ten thouſand Proteſtant Popes."

"Thou knoweſt, Lord, that many of them love thee; and that, though they diſgrace thy goſpel by their doctrinal peculiarities, they adorn it by their godly converſation. O endue them with more love to their remonſtrant brethren! Give them and me that charity which behaveth not itſelf unſeemly, which rejoiceth not in a favourite error, but rejoiceth in the truth, even when it is advanced by our opponents. Thou ſeeſt, that if they decry true holineſs and good works as "dung and droſs," it is chiefly for fear thy glory ſhould be obſcured by our obedience. Error transformed into an angel of light has deceived them, and they think to do thee ſervice by propagating the deception. O gracious God, pardon them this wrong. They do it ignorantly in unbelief; therefore ſeal not up their miſtake with the ſeal of thy wrath: Let them yet know the truth, and let the truth enlarge their hearts, and make them free from the notion, that thou art not loving to every man during the day of ſalvation; and that there is neither mercy nor Saviour for moſt of their neighbours, even during the accepted time."

"Above all, Lord, if they cannot defend their miſtakes, either by argument or ſcripture; give them more wiſdom, than to expoſe any longer the proteſtant religion, which they think to defend; and more piety, than to make the men of the world abhor thy goſpel, and blaſpheme thy name, as free-thinkers are daily tempted to do, when they ſee, that thoſe, who pretend to "exalt thee" moſt, are of all Proteſtants the moſt ready to diſarm thy goſpel of its ſanctions; to turn thy judicial ſentences into frivolous preſcriptions; to overlook the dictates of reaſon, and good nature; and to make the preſs groan under illogical aſſertions, and perſonal abuſe!"

"Let thy ſervant ſpeak once more: Thou knoweſt, O Lord, that thy power being my helper, I would chuſe to die rather than wilfully to depreciate that grace,

grace, that free grace of thine, which has ſo long kept me out of hell, and daily gives me ſweet foretaſtes of heaven. And now, Lord, let not readers of a Phariſaic turn, miſtake what I have advanced in honour of the *works of faith*, and by that means build themſelves up in their ſelf-righteous deluſion, and deſtructive contempt of thy merits: Help them to conſider, that if our works are rewardable, it is becauſe thy free grace makes them ſo; thy Father having mercifully accepted our perſons for thy ſake, thy holy ſpirit having gently helped our infirmities, thy precious blood having fully atoned for our ſins and imperfections, thy inceſſant interceſſion ſtill keeping the way to the throne of grace open for us, and our poor performances. Suffer not one of the ſons of virtuous pride, into whoſe hands theſe ſheets may fall, to forget that thou haſt annexed the reward of the inheritance to the aſſemblage of the works of faith, or to patient continuance in well doing, and not to one or two ſplendid works, done juſt to ſerve a wordly turn, or to bribe a clamorous conſcience: And enable them ſo to feel the need of thy pardon for paſt tranſgreſſions, and of thy power for future obedience, that, as the chaſed hart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo their awakened ſouls may long after Chriſt, in whom the penitent find inexhauſtible ſprings of righteouſneſs and ſtrength; and to whom, with thee, and thy eternal Spirit, be for ever aſcribed praiſe, honour, and glory both in heaven and upon earth;——*praiſe*, for the wonders of general redemption, and for the innumerable diſplays of thy Free-grace unſtained by Free-wrath;—*honour*, for beſtowing the gracious reward of an heavenly ſalvation upon all believers, that make their election ſure by patient continuance in *well-doing*—and *glory* for inflicting juſt puniſhment upon all that neglect ſo great ſalvation, and to the end of the accepted time daring thy vengeance by obſtinate continuance in *ill-doing*."

END OF THE SCRIPTURAL ESSAY.

APPEN-

APPENDIX.

Madeley, March 11, 1774.

YESTERDAY a friend lent me Mr. Baxter's *Confession of Faith*, printed in London 1655. The third part of this valuable book extends through above 140 large pages, and the title of that long section runs thus: *The testimony of reformed divines ascribing as much to* WORKS *as I: and many of them delivering the same doctrine.* He produces a hundred witnesses, some of whom are collective bodies, such as the Assembly-Divines, the compilers of the Homilies of the Church of England, and even the Synod of Dort. As the Antinomian spirit which flamed against Baxter's works in the last century, will probably sparkle against the preceding Essay, I beg leave to shelter behind that great man, and a few of his numerous quotations. I shall cite only Baxter's page, to which I refer those who desire to see the original of his Latin quotations, together with the books, chapters, and pages of the various authors.

Page 322, he quotes the following words from Bishop Davenant, "As no man *receiveth* that general justification which discharges from the guilt of all *foregoing* sins, but on the concurrence of repentance, faith, a purpose of a new life, and other actions of the same kind; so no man *retaineth* a state free from guilt in respect of *following* sins, but by means of the same actions of believing in God, calling on God, mortifying the flesh, daily repenting and sorrowing for sins daily committed. The reason why all these are required on our part, is this: Because these cannot be still absent, but their opposites will be present, which are contrary to the nature of a justified man.—As therefore to the conservation of natural life it is necessarily required, that a man carefully avoid fire, water, precipices, poisons, and other things destructive to the health of the body; so to the conserving of spiritual

tual life, it is neceſſarily required that a man avoid incredulity, impenitency, and other things that are deſtructive and contrary to the ſalvation of ſouls; which cannot be avoided unleſs the oppoſite and contrary actions be exerciſed. And theſe actions do not conſerve the life of grace properly and of themſelves, by touching the very effect of conſervation, but improperly and by accident, by excluding and removing the cauſe of deſtruction."

Page 324, Baxter produces theſe words of the ſame pious biſhop, "We do therefore fight againſt, not the bare name of *merit*, in a harmleſs ſenſe frequently uſed of old by the fathers, but the proud and falſe opinion of merit of *condignity*, brought lately by the Papiſts into the church of God."

And again, page 325, "The works of the regenerate have an ordination to the rewards of this life and that to come. 1. Becauſe God hath freely promiſed (according to the good pleaſure of his will) the rewards of this life and that to come, to the good works of the faithful and regenerate, 1 Tim. iv. 8. Gal. vi. 8. Mat. xx. 8."

Page 328, he quotes the following paſſage from Dr. Twiſs, "It lieth on all elect to ſeek ſalvation, not only by faith, but by works alſo, in that without doubt ſalvation is to be given by way of reward, whereby God will reward not only our faith, but alſo all our good works."

Page 330 and 331, he quotes Melanchon thus, "New obedience is neceſſary by neceſſity of order of the cauſe and effect, alſo by neceſſity of duty or command, alſo by neceſſity of retaining faith, and avoiding puniſhments temporal and eternal."—"Cordatus ſtirreth up againſt me the city, and alſo the neighbour countries, and alſo the court itſelf, becauſe in explaining the controverſy of juſtification, I ſaid, that new obedience is neceſſary to ſalvation."

Page 360, 361, he quotes theſe words of Zanchius: "Works are neceſſary: 1. To juſtify our faith [coram Deo] before God, &c. 2. They are neceſſary to the obtaining eternal life, &c. They are neceſſary

to

to inherit juſtification as CAUSES, &c. 4. They are profitable to conſerve and increaſe faith: alſo to PROMERIT of God and obtain many good things, both ſpiritual and corporal, both in this life and in another." The words of Zanchius are, "*Opera utilia ſunt, &c. ad multa bona tum ſpiritualia tum corporalia, tum in hac vita tum in alia a Deo* PROMERENDA *et obtinenda.*" Zanch. Tom. 8, p. 787. loc: de juſt. fidei. How much more tenderly did Mr. Weſley ſpeak of merit than the orthodox Zanchius, whom Mr. Toplady has lately rendered famous among us! I hope, that if this gentleman ever opens his favourite book to the above-quoted page, he will drop his prejudices, and confeſs that his dear Zanchius himſelf nobly contends for the "Weſleian hereſy."

Page 462, Baxter concludes his book by praying for thoſe, who had miſrepreſented him to the world, and obliged him to ſpend ſo much time in vindicating his doctrine. I moſt heartily join him in the laſt paragraph of his prayer, in which I beg the reader would join us both. "The Lord illuminate and ſend forth ſome meſſenger, that may acquaint the churches with that *true, middle, reconciling method of theological verities, which muſt be the means of healing our diviſions.* Let men be raiſed of greater ſufficiency for this work, and of ſuch bleſſed accompliſhments as ſhall be fit to cope with the power of prejudice; and let the fury of blind contradiction be ſo calmed, that TRUTH may have opportunity to do its work."

End of the APPENDIX to the SCRIPTURAL ESSAY.

AN ESSAY ON TRUTH;

BEING A RATIONAL VINDICATION

Of the DOCTRINE of *Salvation by Faith.*

EXCEEDINGLY ſorry ſhould I be, if the teſtimony which I have borne to the neceſſity of good works, cauſed any of my readers to do the worſt of bad works, that is, to neglect believing, and to depend upon ſome of the external, faithleſs performances, which conceited phariſees call "good works;" and by which they abſurdly think to make amends for their ſins, to purchaſe the divine favour, to ſet aſide God's mercy, and to ſuperſede Chriſt's atoning blood. Therefore, leſt ſome unwary ſouls, going from one extreme to the other, ſhould ſo unfortunately avoid antinomianiſm, as to run upon the rocks, which are rendered famous by the deſtruction of the phariſees, I ſhall once more vindicate the fundamental, anti-phariſaic doctrine of *ſalvation by faith:* I ſay *once more*, becauſe I have already done it in my guarded ſermon: and to the Scriptures, Articles, and Arguments produced in that piece, I ſhall now add rational, and yet ſcriptural obſervations, which, together with appeals to matter of fact, will, I hope, ſoften the prejudices of judicious moraliſts againſt the doctrine of faith, and reconcile conſiderate Solifidians to the doctrine of works. In order to this, I deſign in general to prove that true faith is the only plant, which can poſſibly bear good works: That it loſes its operative nature, and dies when it produces them not: And that it as much ſurpaſſes good works in importance, as the motion of the heart does all other bodily motions. Enquire we firſt into the nature and ground of ſaving faith.

SECTION

SECTION I.

A plain Definition of SAVING FAITH, how believing is the Gift of GOD, and whether it is in our power to believe.

WHAT is *Faith?* It is *believing heartily.*— What is *saving* faith? I dare not say, that it is "only believing confidently, my sins are forgiven me for Christ's sake," for, if I live in sin, that belief is a *destructive* conceit, and not saving faith. Neither dare I say, that "saving faith is only a sure trust and confidence, that Christ loved me, and gave himself for me *:" For if I did, I should damn almost all mankind for 4000 years.

To avoid putting on the black mark of DAMNATION upon any man, that in any nation fears God and works righteousness; I would chuse to say, that "saving faith is *believing* the saving truth *with the heart unto* internal, and (as we have opportunity) *unto* external *righteousness*, according to our light and dispensation." To St. Paul's words, Rom. x. 10. I add the epithets *internal* and *external.* in order to exclude according to 1 John iii. 7, 8, the filthy imputation under which fallen believers may, if we credit the Antinomians, commit internal and external adultery, mental and bodily murder, without the least fear of endangering their interest in God's favour, and their inadmissible title to a throne of glory.

But, "How is faith the gift of God?"—Some persons think, that faith is as much out of our power, as the lightning that shoots from a distant cloud; they suppose that God drives sinners to the fountain of Christ's blood, as irresistibly as the infernal Legion drove the herd of swine into the sea of Galilee; and

* When the Church of England, and Mr. Wesley, give us particular definitions of faith, it is plain, that they consider it according to the *Christian* dispensation; the privileges of which must be principally insisted upon among Christians; and that our church and Mr. Wesley guard faith against Antinomianism, is evident from their maintaining, as well as St. Paul, that by bad works we lose a good conscience, and *make shipwreck of the faith.*

that a man is as paſſive in the firſt act of faith, as Jonah was in the act of the fiſh, which caſt him upon the ſhore. Hence, the plea of many, who lay faſt hold on the horns of the Devil's altar, UNBELIEF, and cry out, "We can no more believe, than we can make a world."

But this is an *abſurd* plea for ſeveral reaſons: 1. It ſuppoſes, that when *God commands all men every where to repent, and to believe the goſpel*, he commands them to do what is as impoſſible to them as the making of a new world.—2. It ſuppoſes, that the terms of the covenant of *grace* are much harder than the terms of works. For the old covenant required only perfect human obedience: but the new covenant requires of *us* the work of an Almighty God, i. e. *believing*; a work this, which upon the ſcheme I oppoſe, is as impoſſible to *us* as the creation of the world.—3. It ſuppoſes, that the promiſe of ſalvation being ſuſpended upon *believing*, a thing as impracticable to us as the making of a new world, we ſhall as infallibly be damned, if God does not believe in, or for us, as we ſhould be, if we were to make a world on pain of damnation.—4. It ſuppoſes, that believing is a work, which belongs to God alone: for no man in his ſenſes can doubt but *creating a world*, or its tantamount, *believing*, is a work which none but God can manage.

5. It ſuppoſes, that when Chriſt *marvelled at the unbelief* of the Jews, he ſhewed as little wiſdom as I ſhould, were I to marvel at a man for not creating three worlds as quickly as a believer can ſay three creeds.—And laſtly, that when Chriſt fixes our damnation upon *unbelief* (ſee Mark xvi. 16, and John iii, 18.) he acts far more tyrannically than the king would do, if he iſſued out a proclamation informing all his ſubjects, that whoſoever ſhall not, by ſuch a time, raiſe a new Iſland within the Britiſh ſeas, ſhall be infallibly put to the moſt painful death.

Having thus expoſed the erroneous ſenſe, in which ſome people ſuppoſe, that *faith is the gift of God*; I beg leave to mention in what ſenſe it appears to me to

be

be ſo.—*Believing* is the gift of the *God of* GRACE, as *breathing*, *moving*, and *eating*, are the gifts of the *God of* NATURE. He gives me lungs and air, that I may breathe; he gives me life and muſcles, that I may move; he beſtows upon me food and a mouth, that I may eat; and when I have no ſtomach, he gives me common ſenſe to ſee, I muſt die or force myſelf to take ſome nouriſhment or ſome medicine: but he neither *breathes*, *moves*, nor *eats* for me; nay, when I think proper, I can accelerate my breathing, motion, and eating: and if I pleaſe I may even *faſt*, *lie down*, or *hang myſelf*, and by that means put an end to my *eating*, *moving*, and *breathing*. Again, *Faith* is the gift of God to believers, as *ſight* is to you. The Parent of good freely gives you the light of the ſun, and organs proper to receive it: He places you in a world, where that light viſits you daily: He apprizes you, that ſight is conducive to your ſafety, pleaſure, and profit: and every thing around you bids you uſe your eyes and ſee: nevertheleſs, you may not only drop your curtains, and extinguiſh your candle, but cloſe your eyes alſo. This is exactly the caſe with regard to faith. Free grace removes (in part) the total blindneſs which Adam's fall brought upon us: Free grace gently ſends us ſome beams of truth, which is the light of *the Sun of Righteouſneſs*; it diſpoſes the eyes of our underſtanding to ſee thoſe beams; it excites us various ways to welcome them; it bleſſes us with many, perhaps with all the means of faith, ſuch as opportunities to hear, read, enquire; and power to conſider, aſſent, conſent, reſolve, and re-reſolve to believe the truth. But, after all, *believing* is as much our own act as *ſeeing*: We may, in general, do, ſuſpend, or omit the *act* of faith; eſpecially when that act is not yet become *habitual*, and when the glaring light that *ſometimes* accompanies the revelation of the truth is abated. Nay, we may imitate Pharaoh, Judas, and all reprobates: We may be ſo averſe from *the light, which enlightens every man that comes into the world*, we may ſo dread it becauſe our works are evil, as to exemplify, like the Phariſees, ſuch awful

ful declarations as these: "Their eyes have they closed, lest they should see, &c.—Wherefore God gave them up to a reprobate mind, and they were blinded."

Two things have chiefly given room to our mistakes, respecting the *strange impossibility* of believing, the *first* is our confounding the truths, which characterize the several gospel-dispensations. We see, for example, that a poor besotted drunkard, an over-reaching, greedy tradesman, a rich sceptical epicure, and a proud ambitious courtier, have no more taste for *the gospel of Christ*, than a horse and a mule have for the high-seasoned dishes that crown a royal table. An immense gulph is fixed between them, and the *Christian* faith. In their present state they can no more believe *in Christ*, than an unborn infant can become a man without passing through infancy and youth. But, altho' they cannot yet believe *in Christ*, may they not believe *in God* according to the import of our Lord's words, *Ye believe* IN GOD, *believe also* IN ME? If the *Pharisees* COULD NOT *believe* IN CHRIST, it was not because God never gave them a power equal to that which created the world; but because they were practical Atheists, who actually rejected the *morning light* of the *Jewish* dispensation, and by that means absolutely unfitted themselves for the *meridian light* of the *Christian* dispensation.

The *second* cause of our mistake about the impossibility of *believing now*, is the confounding weak with strong faith. But had Abraham no faith in God's promise, till Isaac was born? Was Sarah a damnable unbeliever, till she felt the long-expected fruit of her womb stir there? Had the woman of Canaan no faith, till our Lord granted her request, and cried out, "O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt?" Was the Centurion an Infidel, till Christ *marvelled at his faith*, and declared, *he had not found such faith, no not in Israel?* And had the Apostles no faith in *the promise of the Father*, till their heads were crowned with celestial fire? Can you from Genesis to Revelation find one single instance of

of a ſoul willing to believe, and abſolutely unable to do it? From theſe two Scriptures, "Lord, increaſe our faith:"—"Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief," can you juſtly infer, that the praying diſciples, and the diſtreſſed father, had no power to believe? Do not their words evidence juſt the contrary? That we cannot believe, any more than we can eat, without the help of God, is what we are all agreed upon; but does this, in the leaſt prove, that the help by which we believe, is as far out of the reach of willing ſouls, as the power to make a world?

Such Scriptures as theſe, "unto you it is given to believe."—"A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven."—"No man can come unto me, except the Father draw him."—"Every good gift, (and of courſe that of faith) cometh from the Father of lights."—Such ſcriptures, I ſay, ſecure indeed the honour of free grace, but do not deſtroy the power of free agency. To us that freely *believe* in a holy, righteous *God*, *it is given* freely *to believe* in a gracious bleeding Saviour; becauſe *the ſick* alone *have need of a phyſician*; and none but thoſe who believe in *God*, can ſee the need of *an* ADVOCATE *with him:* but ought we from thence to conclude, that our unbelieving neighbours are neceſſarily debarred from *believing in* God? When our Lord ſaid to the unbelieving Jews, that they COULD NOT *believe* in him, did he not ſpeak of an impotency of their own making? I aſk it again, if they obſtinately reſiſted the light of their inferior diſpenſation; if they were none of Chriſt's *Jewiſh* ſheep, how could they be his *Chriſtian* ſheep? If an obſtinate boy ſets himſelf againſt learning the letters, how can he ever learn to read? If a ſtubborn Jew ſtiffly oppoſes *the law of Moſes*, how can he ſubmit to *the law of Chriſt?* Is it not ſtrange that ſome good people ſhould leap into reprobation, rather than to admit ſo obvious a ſolution of this little difficulty!

From the above-mentioned texts we have then no more reaſon to infer, that God forces believers to believe, or that he believes for them, than to conclude

that

that God conſtrains diligent tradeſmen to get money, or gets it for them, becauſe it is ſaid, "We are not ſufficient to THINK ANY thing as of ourſelves, but our ſufficiency is of God,—who GIVES US ALL things richly to enjoy."—"Remember the Lord thy God, for it is HE that GIVETH THEE power to get wealth."

From the whole I conclude, that, ſo long as the *accepted time*, and *the day of ſalvation* continue, all ſinners who have not yet finally hardened themſelves, may day and night (through the help and power of the general light of Chriſt's *ſaving grace*, mentioned John i. 9, and Tit. ii. 11.) receive *ſome* truth belonging to the *everlaſting goſpel*; (ſee note 8, p. 39) though it ſhould be only this: "There is a God, who will call us to an account for our ſins, and who ſpares us that we may break them off by repentance." And their cordial believing of this truth, will make way for their receiving the higher truths, that ſtand between them and the top of the myſterious ladder of truth. I grant, it is impoſſible they ſhould leap at once to the middle, much leſs to the higheſt round of that ladder; but if the foot of it is upon earth, in the very nature of things, the loweſt ſtep is within their reach, and by laying hold of it, they may go on from *faith to faith*, till they ſtand firm even in the *Chriſtian* faith; if diſtinguiſhing grace has elected them to hear *the Chriſtian* goſpel.

SECTION II.

Truth cordially embraced by Faith, ſaves under every diſpenſation of divine Grace, though in different degrees. A ſhort view of the truths that characterize the four grand Diſpenſations of the everlaſting Goſpel.

FAITH is more or leſs operative according to the *quality* of the truths which it embraces. This obſervation recommends itſelf to reaſon: For, as ſome wines are more generous, and ſome remedies more powerful; ſo ſome truths are more more reviving

and

and sanctifying than others. But every evangelical truth, being a beam of the *Sun of Righteousness risen* upon us *with healing in his wings*, is of a SAVING nature; "the SAVING grace of God, which has appeared unto all men, teaching us to deny ungodliness, &c. and to live soberly, &c." Thus I am saved from ATHEISM, by heartily believing, *there is a God, who will judge the world*:—From PHARISAISM, by firmly believing, that I am a miserable sinner, and that *without Christ I can do nothing*:—From SADDUCEISM, by truly believing, that *the* SPIRIT ITSELF *helpeth* my *infirmities*:—From ANTINOMIANISM, by cordially believing, that *God is not a respecter of persons* but *a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, and a punisher of all that presumptuously break his commandments:—And from DESPAIR, by steadily believing, that *God is love*, that *he sent his only begotten Son into the world to save that which was lost*, and that I *have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous*.

Hence it appears: 1. That every religious truth suitable to our present circumstances (when it is kindly presented by free grace, and affectionately embraced by prevented free-will) instantly forms, according to its degree, the saving, *operative* faith, that converts, transforms, and renews the soul. And, 2. That this faith is more or less operative according to the *quality* of the truth presented to us: according to the *power*, with which the Spirit of grace impresses it upon our hearts; and according to the *earnestness*, with which we receive, espouse, and welcome it to our inmost souls.

When God fixed *the bounds of the habitation of mankind*, he placed some nations in warm climates and fruitful countries, where the juice of the grape is plentiful. And to others he assigned a barren, rocky soil, covered with snow half the year: water is their cordial, nor have they any more idea of their want of wine, than St. Peter had of his want of the blood of Christ, when he made the noble confession upon which the Christian Church is founded. Oh, say a Predestinarian geographer, the God of Providence has absolutely

lutely reprobated thofe " poor creatures." Not fo, replies an unprejudiced philofopher; they may be as healthy and as happy over their cup of cold water, as fome of our men of fortune are over their bottles of claret and madeira. And fome of thofe " poor creatures," as you call them, may come from the eaft and from the weft, to drink the wine of the kingdom of God with Abraham, when the children of the kingdom fhall be thruft out.

What I have faid of water and wine, may illuftrate what the fcriptures fay of the truths peculiar to the gofpel difpenfations. God forbid, that an *antichriftian* zeal for the *Chriftian* gofpel, fhould make me drive into the burning lake Chrift's *fheep*, which are *big with young:* I mean the fincere worfhippers, that wait like pious Melchizedec, devout Lydia, and charitable Cornelius, for brighter difplays of gofpel-grace: for, there are faithful fouls, that follow their light under every difpenfation, concerning whom our Lord kindly faid, " Other fheep I have, which are not of this [Jewifh and Chriftian] fold. Them alfo I muft bring into marvellous light, and there fhall be one fold and one fhepherd." Thofe feeble fheep, and tender lambs I muft take into my bofom; and to give them their portion of meat in due feafon, I venture upon the following remark.

If free-will prevented by free-grace, *ardently* receives the truths of the *Chriftian* Gofpel, *Chriftian* Faith is conceived. If the heart fervently embraces the truths of the *Jewifh* or *Gentile*-gofpel; [thofe which are peculiar to the Chriftian gofpel remaining as yet veiled] the *faith* of a *Jew*, or of a *Heathen* is begotten. Nevertheleſs if this faith, let it be ever fo aſſaulted by doubts, works by love, it is faving in its degree.

I fay *in its degree*; for as there are in the earth various rich tinctures, fome of which form diamonds, while others form only rubies, emeralds, or agates; fo there are in the univerfal church of Chrift, various tinctures of gofpel-truth, which form various orders of fpiritual jewels, as appears from fuch fcriptures as

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these. "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."—"For in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness is accepted of him," according to the dispensation he is under, and the progress he has made in practical religion.

This gospel, for example, "God hath made of one blood all nations of men, that they should seek the Lord (as the gracious Author of their being.) and love one another as brothers."---This everlasting gospel, I say, has in all countries *leavened* the hearts of pious Heathens. This doctrine, "Messiah will come to point out clearly the way of salvation," added to the gospel of the Gentiles, has tinctured with superior goodness the hearts of believing Jews. This truth, "Messiah is come in the flesh," superadded to the Jewish gospel, has enlarged the heart of all the disciples of John, or the *babes in Christ*. And these Truths, "Christ died for my sins, and rose again for "my justification: He is ascended up on high: He "has received the gift of the Spirit for men;—for "me. I believe on him by the power of that Spirit. "He dwells in my heart by faith. He is in me the "hope of glory. The promise of the Father is fulfilled: The kingdom of God, [righteousness, peace, "and joy in the Holy Ghost] is come with power:" —These richer Truths, I say, superadded to those, which are essential to the inferior dispensations, tincture the hearts of all *adult Christians*, and make them more or less intimately one with Christ, according to the degree of their Faith, and the influences of his Spirit.

SECTION III.

Saving FAITH is more particularly described by its rise and operations; and distinguished from the faith of trembling Devils, immoral Antinomians, Penitents sold under sin, and modish Professors, who believe without Frame and Feeling.

IF we aſſent to a religious truth, merely becauſe we cannot reſiſt its evidence;—if we hate it, wanting to ſhake it off, wiſhing it were a lie, and fretting becauſe we cannot make it ſo; we have the faith of devils: for *devils believe and tremble*; the force of the awful truths, which they cannot deny, giving them a foretaſte of infernal torments.

The faith of immoral profeſſors is not much better than the faith of Satan. Two or three compariſons may help us to underſtand this *myſtery of iniquity*. When a perſon viſits you, you may either receive him with cold civility, as a ſtranger; or embrace him with warm affection, as a friend. From ſecret motives you may even ſhew a peculiar regard to a man, whom you ſecretly deſpiſe or deteſt. He has a good voice, you love muſic, and he miniſters to your amuſement: perhaps you want him to cloke the ſin of your Bathſheba; perhaps you are a party man; he is a proper tool for you; and therefore you make much of him. But while your regard for him ſprings merely from ſuch external circumſtances, can it ever be ſincere? Equally ungenerous is the regard that Gallio and Fulſome have for the truth. Gallio holds faſt the doctrine of general redemption, becauſe he fondly ſuppoſes, that he has only to avoid robbery and murder to go to heaven: Fulſome extols "everlaſting love,"—but it is becauſe he thinks, that it gives him the liberty of loving the world, without the leaſt danger of loſing God's eternal favour. He embraces "juſtification by faith alone;" but it is becauſe he confounds *the works of faith* and *the works of the law*, and vainly hopes to be finally juſtified without either. He ſhouts, "free grace" for ever, becauſe it enſures, as he thinks, his eternal ſalvation, whatever length he may go in ſin. I queſtion if an Indian warrior is fonder of the ſcalp of an Engliſhman, than *Gallio* is of the doctrine of "God's mercy," ſeparated from God's holineſs and juſtice; or *Fulſome*, of the doctrine of "Chriſt's merits," torn away from the evangelical worthineſs of ſincere obedience.

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The soaring faith of an immoral Antinomian is inferior to the abortive faith of an imperfect penitent, whom St. Paul describes in his own person, Rom vii. We approve the revealed will of God, and "delight in his law after the inward man;" But we cannot yet give up our bosom-sin; carnal reason and the flesh prevail still against the spirit, though not without a struggle; unbelief and abortive faith (if I may use the expression) wrestling in our distracted breasts, make us complain, "The good that I would do, (if it cost me nothing,) I do not: but the evil I would not, that I do." Thus *with his mind*, his rational powers, the carnal penitent *serves the law of God*, by good, tho' ineffectual resolutions; but with his *flesh*, his carnal appetites, he *serves the law of sin*, by bad, though lamented performances.

Faith does not struggle into birth without her coeval child and constant partner, *Hope*. When Faith fails, Despair groans, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me?" But when faith revives, hope lifts up her head, and cries, "I thank God, there is deliverance through Jesus Christ our Lord." Thus we go on falling and rising, dying and reviving, till we are quite tired of the sins, which hinder us from welcoming the saving faith with a more cordial embrace; and when we do this, our faith is unfeigned; the Lord sets to it the broad seal of his power; it proves victorious; we enter into gospel-liberty, and instead of the old note, *Who shall deliver me?* We sing, *Christ hath delivered us from the curse of the law* of sin, as well as from the curse of the law of innocence, and of the ceremonial law. "There is no condemnation to them that believe, and *walk* not after the flesh, but after the spirit."

The manner, in which this deliverance is generally wrought, may be more particularly described thus. Free grace, at sundry times, and in divers manners, speaks to our consciences; recommending and enforcing the word nigh, the commandment that is everlasting life. If it is the day of provocation, we unnecessarily begin to make excuse: We *cannot* come

to the marriage feaſt: We are either too good, too bad, or too buſy to entertain the truth; and we ſay as civilly as Felix, Go thy way for this time, when I ſhall be fitter, or when I ſhall have a more convenient ſeaſon, I will call for thee. Perhaps we perverſely harden our hearts, contradicting, or blaſpheming. But if our free-willing ſoul knows the time of her viſitation; humbly bowing at the word of the Lord, and ſaying as the Virgin Mary, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done unto me according to thy WORD:" I am a loſt ſinner, but there is mercy with thee that thou mayeſt be feared; then the Seed of the kingdom, the word of God, is received in an honeſt and good heart; for nothing is wanting to render the heart initially good and honeſt, but the ſincere ſubmiſſion of our free will to that free grace, which courts us and ſays, "Behold! I ſtand at the door of every heart and knock: If ANY MAN hear my voice and open, I will come in and ſup with him, and he with me;" he ſhall taſte how good the Lord is, he ſhall taſte the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.

Thus opens the kingdom of God in the believing ſoul; Thus is Chriſt, the Truth and the Life, formed in the heart by faith: Thus grace begins to *reign* through Righteouſneſs unto eternal Life by Jeſus Chriſt.

I call that Faith *ſaving* and OPERATIVE, becauſe, ſo long as it lives, it *ſaves*; and ſo long as it ſaves, it WORKS *righteouſneſs*;—it WORKS by a righteous *fear* of the evil denounced againſt ſin; by a righteous oppoſition to every known ſin; by a righteous *hope* of the good promiſed to obedience; and by a righteous *love* of God. Therefore, when living faith ceaſes to *work*, it dies away, as the heart that ceaſes to beat;—it goes out, as a candle that ceaſes to ſhine.

"But, upon this footing, what becomes of the "modiſh doctrine of a faith without frame and feel-"ing?" If the miniſters, who recommend ſuch a faith, mean, that we muſt ſet our heart, as a ſeal, to the goſpel truths adapted to our preſent ſtate, and ſtamp

them

them with all our might; not considering whether our *fallen* nature and *carnal* reason relish them, they maintain a great truth, which cannot be too much urged upon tempted, and despairing souls. But if they mean, that we must believe ourselves unconditionally elected to glory, be the *frame* of our minds ever so carnal, and the *feelings* of our hearts ever so worldly, they destroy the health of the daughter of God's people, with as rank poison as ever grew in spiritual Egypt. I am no judge of what passes in the breast of those gentlemen; but, for my part, I never FEEL *faith* more strongly at work, than when I wrestle not only with flesh and blood, but with the banded powers of darkness.

* None but a dead man is quite destitute of "frame and feeling:" It is not a *real* flame that neither warms in winter, nor shines in the dark. The moment a light is not, in its degree, able to triumph over darkness, and even to turn it into light, it ceases to be a *true* light. You may see in Windsor-Castle a candle most exquisitely painted; it *shines* as stedfastly as Mr. Fulsome *believes*. Was the coloured canvas as loquacious as that Antinomian Hero, it might say, "I shine without feeling;" but even then, Mr. Fulsome's faith would have the pre-eminence; for, if we credit him, it shines without either "frame or feeling." How absurd is Solifidianism! How dangerous! If any man can shew me a true light, that *actually* emits no beams, I will repent of the ridicule I cast upon the dotages which make way for a "justifying faith" that works by adultery and murder; an ill-smelling candle this, which burns in the breasts of apostates, to the honour of him, that kindled it at the fire of tophet;—an infernal candle, sending forth darkness instead of light, and so far benighting the good men who follow it, that they look upon it as the inextinguishable *candle of the Lord*, and upon "sincere obedience" as a "*jack o'lanthorn*."

SECTION IV.

The REASONABLENESS of the Doctrine of Salvation by Faith is farther evinced by a variety of Arguments.—How much we are indebted to the Solifidians, for having firmly ſtood up in defence of FAITH: How dearly they have made us pay for that ſervice, when they have ſo enforced our XIth Article, which guards ſalvation by faith, as to make void the XIIth, which guards morality.—And why the overpowering ſplendor of TRUTH is qualified by ſome ſhades.

SHOULD ſome readers ſtill think, that it is unreaſonable to dwell *firſt* upon Faith, and to inſiſt *more* upon it than upon the other works and graces, which adorn the life and character of a Chriſtian; to remove their ſcruples, and to vindicate more fully the fundamental doctrine of Salvation by Faith, I preſent them with the following Remarks.

1. If true *Faith* is the root that produces hope, love, and ſincere obedience, is it not reaſonable *principally* to urge the neceſſity of *believing aright?* The end of all preaching is undoubtedly to plant the tree of evangelical obedience; and how can that tree be planted, but by its *root?* Was a gardener ever charged with unreaſonableneſs, for not ſetting a tree by the branches?

2. If *faith working by love* is the *heart* of true religion, ſhould we not beſtow our chief attention and care upon it? Suppoſe you were a phyſician, and attended a patient who had an impoſthume in his ſtomach and another on his hand; would you do honour to your ſkill, if overlooking the internal miſchief, you confined your attention to the external ulcer?

If the Scripture declares four times, that *the juſt ſhall* LIVE *by his* FAITH, a declaration this, which St. Paul confirms by his own experience, when he ſays, *I* LIVE *by* FAITH; is it not evident, that when we practically reject the doctrine of *Faith*, we reject *Life*, together with all the bleſſings which are *brought*

to

to light by the gospel; a gospel *disbelieved* being undoubtedly a gospel REJECTED.

4. If Abraham, by "not staggering at the promise of God through *unbelief*, and by being strong in *faith*, gave glory to God, and did set his seal that God is true:"—If you cannot honour a superior more, than by receiving his every word with respectful confidence, and by moving at his every beck with obedient alacrity:—And if *faith* thus honours God, why should you refuse it the first place among the graces, which support and adorn the church *militant?* Especially since the Lord declares, that "the *pure* in *heart* shall see God," and that our "*hearts* are *purified* by *faith?*"—And since the Scriptures testify, that "without *holiness*, no man shall see the Lord," and that we "are *sanctified* through *faith* that is in him?"

5. All fulness dwells in God: Creatures abstracted from the divine plenitude are mere emptiness. Rational creatures, in their most perfect state, are only *moral vessels* filled with the grace of God, and reflecting the light of divine truth. Now if we can be saved any other way but *by grace, through* obedient *faith*, i. e. by freely *receiving* the grace and light of God, through the practical belief of the truth proposed to us:—If we are in any degree saved by our proper merit through *faithless* works; we may indulge Pharisaic boasting. But, God does not so give his glory to sinful worms: Therefore such a *boasting is excluded by the law of faith*; and the apostle wisely observes, that salvation is of *Faith*, that it might be by *Grace*; the justifying *faith* of sinners always implying a cordial acknowledgment of their sin and misery, and a hearty recourse to the tender mercy of our God whereby the day-spring from on high has visited us more or less clearly, according to the dispensation we are under.*

6. The

* To establish the doctrine of the gospel-dispensations, to shew that saving truth, in its various manifestations is the object of saving faith, I need only prove, that a man, in order to his salvation, is bound to believe at one time, what he was not bound to believe

6. The manner in which *faith* and its works *exclude boasting*, may be illustrated by a comparison. A beggar lies dying at your door, you offer him a cordial, he takes it, revives, and works.—A deserter is going to be shot, you bring him a pardon from the king, if he will receive it with grateful humility; he does so, joins his regiment, and fights with such courage that he is promoted. Now in these cases it is evident, that *Pharisaic* boasting is excluded. If the beggar lives ever so long, and works ever so hard;—if the deserter fights ever so manfully, and is raised ever so high; yet, they can never say, that *their doings* have procured them the life, which they enjoy; for, before they did such works, that life was graciously given, or restored to them, upon the easy terms of confidently taking a remedy, and humbly accepting a pardon offered. The application is easy: By our fallen nature we are conceived in sin, and children of wrath: God freely gives us the light of life in Jesus Christ; faith freely and humbly receives it, and works by it; the believer therefore, can never be so unrea-

at another. Take one instance out of many. If St. Peter had died just after he had been pronounced *blessed*, for acknowledging that our Lord was *the Son of God*, he could not have been *cursed* with a "*Depart from me*," &c. he would have been *saved*: and in that case, he would have obtained salvation without believing one tittle about our Lord's *resurrection*; and nevertheless St. Paul, a few years after, justly represented *that* article as essential to the *salvation* of those, to whom it was revealed: IF *thou shalt* BELIEVE *with thy heart, that God hath* RAISED *the Lord Jesus from the dead, thou shalt be* SAVED, Rom. x. 9.—Few people, I think, can read the Acts of the Apostles, without seeing, that the numerous conversions wrought by St. Peter's preaching, were wrought by the force of this truth, "God hath raised up that Jesus, whom you have crucified:" A victorious *truth* this, which would have been a gross *untruth* three months before the day of Pentecost. Nay, what is at one time an article of *saving* faith, may at another time become an article of the most confirmed unbelief: Thus, the expectation of the Messiah, which was a capital article of the faith of the ancient Israelites, is now the buttress of the Babel of modern Jews. The property of faith is then to make our hearts bow to the truth, as it is manifested to us; it being evident, that God never blamed the children of men, for not believing what was never revealed to them.

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sonable, and ungrateful, as to suppose, that his working merited him the Light of Life, by which he began to work righteousness: So long as he deserves the name of a believer, he knows, he feels, that his faith is in the FIRST place a *mere receiver*. "What hast thou, that thou hast not received," roars like thunder in the ears of a *lively* faith, and like lightning strikes dead the *Pharisaic* boaster.

7. I say, that faith is in the *first* place a *mere receiver*: this deserves attention. If we consider faith as a conduit-pipe, which at one end receives the power of God, and at the other end refunds that living stream to water the garden of the Lord; we may with propriety compare that mother-grace to the pipe of a watering-pot, which at the internal, unseen opening, receives the water that is in the pot; and at the external, visible perforations, returns it, and forms artificial showers over the drooping plants. According to the doctrine of the Solifidians, faith does nothing but receive the grace of God through Christ; and according to the doctrine of the Moralists, faith is a mere *bestower*: But according to the Gospel of Christ, which embraces and connects the two extremes, Faith is *first* an humble, passive *receiver*, and *then* a cheerful active *bestower*: It receives grace and truth, and returns love and good works. In that respect it resembles the heart, which continually receives the blood from the veins, and returns it into the arteries. If the heart ceases either to *receive* or to *return* the blood, (no matter which) its motion and our animal life are soon at an end: And if faith ceases either to receive grace, or to return good works, its motion and its life soon terminate in spiritual death, according to the doctrine of St. James. If the Solifidians and Moralists candidly looked at faith in this rational and scriptural light, they would soon embrace the whole Gospel, and one another. By considering *faith* as a RECEIVER, [according to the first gospel axiom] Honestus would avoid the *Pharisaic* extreme; and by viewing it as a BESTOWER, [according to the second gospel-axiom] Zelotes would avoid the Antinomian delusion;

deluſion; and both would jointly recommend the humble, cheerful, conſiſtent *paſſiveneſs* and *activity* of Bible-believers.

Laſtly: If our firſt parents fell by BELIEVING the groſs *lies* told them by the ſerpent; is God unreaſonable to raiſe us by making us BELIEVE the great *truths* peculiar to our diſpenſation, that the divine *leaven of ſincerity and truth* may counter-work, and at laſt expel the ſatanic *leaven of malice and wickedneſs?* Who ever thought it abſurd in a Phyſician to proportion the remedy to the diſeaſe; the antidote to the poiſon? And why ſhould even the incarnation of the Son of God, appear a means too wonderful for an end ſo important? Why ſhould it be thought incredible, that the Son of God, who, as our Creator, is far more nearly related to us than our natural parents, ſhould have graciouſly ſtooped as low as the *human* nature to redeem us; when Satan wantonly ſtooped as low as the *beaſtly* nature to tempt us? On the contrary, is it not abſurd to ſuppoſe, that helliſh, wanton malice has done more to deſtroy, than heavenly, creating love to ſave the children of men? For my part, the more I compare the genuine goſpel with the nature of things, the more I admire their harmony: Wondering equally at the prejudices of thoſe haſty profeſſors, who pour perpetual contempt upon reaſon, to keep *their* irrational opinions in countenance; and at the unreaſonableneſs of thoſe pretended votaries of reaſon, who ſuppoſe, that the doctrine of ſalvation by faith is incompatible with good ſenſe.

"But (ſays an objector) if unfeigned faith inſtrumentally *turns us from the power of Satan to God*; why have you publiſhed tracts againſt the Solifidians whoſe favourite doctrine is, *Believe:—He that believeth hath everlaſting life?*"

ANS. By the preceding pages it is evident, that we do not differ from the Solifidians when they preach *Salvation by Faith* in a rational and ſcriptural manner. So long as they do this, we *wiſh them good luck* in the name of the Lord. Nay, I publicly return them my ſincere thanks for the bold ſtand they have made for

faith,

faith, when the floods of Pharisaic ungodliness lifted up their voice against that mother-grace, and threatened to destroy her with all her offspring. But alas! how dear have they made us pay for that service, when they have asserted, that true faith is inadmissible, that it can live in a heart totally depraved, that a man's faith can be good when his actions are bad, detestable, diabolical: In a word, that true Christians may go any length in sin, may plunge into adultery, murder, or incest, and even proceed to the open worship of devils, like Solomon, without losing their title to a throne of glory, and their justifying, sanctifying, saving faith!

This they have done, in flat opposition to our Lord's doctrine: "A good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither does a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit: for every tree is known by its own fruit," Luke vi. 43.—And this some of them seem determined to do, to the stumbling of the judicious, the deceiving of the simple, and the hardening of infidels; notwithstanding our xiith Article, which strongly guards the doctrine of faith against the Solifidian error.—"Good works [says our Church in that truly Anti-calviniftic Article,] do [at this present time,] spring out *necessarily* of a true and lively Faith: [and consequently bad works, out of a false and dead faith,] insomuch that by them a *lively* [and by bad works a *dead*] faith may be as evidently known, as a tree is discerned by the fruit."

But, in the mean time, how do they evade the force of that Article? Why thus, David bears this year the fruit of adultery, hypocrisy, treachery, and murder, before all his kingdom: last year he bore the fruit of chastity, sincerity, truth, and brotherly-love. However, according to the Crispian doctrine, David must be a *tree* of righteousness now, as much as when he bore the fruits of righteousness. If this is not the case, Mr. Fulsome's gospel will be false: Now this must not be. *That* gospel must stand.—"But if it stands, our xiith Article falls to the ground."—Oh! we can prop it up by saying that though a child of God,

God, a tree of righteouſneſs, may now produce adultery, &c. &c. &c. yet he will certainly produce good fruit again *by and by*. To this ſalvo I anſwer, that the Article has only two grand deſigns; the one, inſeparably to connect a *lively* faith and *good* works; and the other, to indicate the manner in which I may know whether I have a *lively* or a *dead* faith. Now if I may have a *lively* faith while I commit adultery, &c. &c. &c. it evidently follows: 1. That the *neceſſary* connexion between a *lively* faith and *good* works is totally loſt: 2. That *adultery* and *murder* may denote a *lively* faith as well as *purity* and *love*: —And 3. That our xiith Article has not even the worth of a noſe of wax, and may be burned with St. James's Epiſtle, as an Article "of ſtraw." And yet theſe gentlemen are the perſons, that repreſent themſelves as the only *fair* ſubſcribers to our Articles, and charge us with prevarication for taking the xviith Article in connexion with the vith, the xiith, the xvith, and the xxxiſt, as well as with the latter part of that Article itſelf, which demand that the election it ſpeaks of, be underſtood of *conditional* election!

To return: Should the reader object, that "If God had ſuſpended our ſalvation upon our practical *belief of the Truth*, he would have put ſo conſpicuous a badge upon the ſaving Truth peculiar to each Diſpenſation, that no body could have miſtaken it for error, enthuſiaſm, prieſt-craft, or nonſenſe:" I anſwer:

1. God having decreed to prove the loyalty and moral ſagacity of his rational creatures, could not but place them in ſuch circumſtances, that they might have an opportunity of exerting themſelves. If hares were chained at the doors of dog-kennels, what ſagacity could hounds manifeſt above maſtiffs? And if the deepeſt truths always lay within the reach of the moſt beſotted ſouls, what advantage would candid diligent enquirers have over thoſe, who wrap their minds in the veil of prejudice, and ſtupidly compoſe themſelves to ſleep in the arms of ignorance and ſloth?

2. God

2. God will *reward* us according to our works of faith; but if the truth were attended with an *irreſiſtible* energy, if it ſhone *always* upon our minds as tranſcendently bright, as the dazzling ſun does ſometimes upon our faces, would God diſplay his wiſdom in *rewarding* us for confeſſing it? Did he, did any man in his ſenſes ever offer to reward us for believing, that a bright luminary rules the day, when its meridian glory overpowers our ſight?

From the preceding anſwers I conclude, that God, who makes the golden light of the ſun, and the ſilver light of the moon to ſucceed each other, and who wiſely tempers the blaze of a ſummer's day, by the mildneſs of the ſtarry night, with equal wiſdom qualifies the blaze of the day of *truth* by the mild obſcurity of a night of *probation*; not only that the *flaming* truth may be more delightful at its *return*, but alſo, that there may be room left for a *gentle trial* of our faith, and for the *reaſonable rewardableneſs* of our works of faith.

SECTION V.

INFERENCES.

1. IF FAITH is ſo cloſely connected with TRUTH; *preſent ſalvation* with *faith*; and *eternal ſalvation* with the *works of faith*; how injudicious are thoſe gentlemen, who aſſert, that *principles* are nothing; and that it little matters what doctrines we hold, provided our actions are good! Alas! if our leading principles are wrong, how can our actions be right? If we are men of *no* principles, or of bad principles, and do ſeemingly-good actions; do we not do them from *bad, phariſaical* motives? Even when ſuch actions appear good to man, who judges according to appearance; are they not evil before the Searcher of hearts? Are they not deteſtable before the Examiner of principles? Undoubtedly,—if they are *phariſaical: hypocriſy* being the moſt odious ſort of iniquity, in the ſight of him, who *requires truth in the inward parts*.

2. If

2. If there are various forms in the School of Truth, how unreasonable is it to say, that none have any acquaintance with her, but such as are in one of the highest forms! And if the Temple of Truth has various divisions to which we advance, as we go on *from faith to faith*; how cruel is it to consign over to damnation the sincere souls, who have yet got no farther than the porch!

3. If there are as many sorts of religious truths, as there are of nourishing food; how irrational is it to despise those truths which the apostle compares to *milk*, merely because they are not the truths, which he calls *strong meat!* On the other hand, if we cannot yet receive those strong truths, how rash are we if we represent them as chaff or poison? And what mischief is done in the Church of Christ, by those who deal in palpable absurdities, and in errors demonstrated to be of a stupifying or intoxicating nature; especially if they retail such errors to an injudicious, credulous populace, under the name of *rich honey* and *gospel-marrow!*

4. When we have once admitted, that "There is a holy God, who makes a difference between the just and the unjust;" can we, without renouncing that truth, turn Antinomians, and think that a man, who defiles his neighbour's wife, can actually be *a man after God's own heart?* And when we have been taught our second gracious lesson; namely, that "We are miserable sinners;" can we, without renouncing this principle, suppose that we can be saved any other way but by the covenant of grace and mercy? Away then, for ever away with *Antinomian* and *Pharisaic* delusions, which are built upon the ruins of these two capital Truths, *God is holy, and Man is sinful!*

SECTION VI.

An ADDRESS to BAPTIZED HEATHENS.

HERE I would take leave of my Readers; but they have a *Conscience*, as well as *Reason*; and therefore I beg leave to address the former of those powers,

powers, as bluntly as I have done the latter; diverſifying my expoſtulations, according to the different caſes of the perſons, into whoſe hands Providence may direct theſe ſheets.

I. If you do not make the bulk of my readers, I fear you make the bulk of the nation, O ye that regard pleaſure, profit, and honour, more than juſtice, mercy, and the fear of God:—Ye, who try to perſuade yourſelves, that religion is nothing but a compound of ſuperſtition, enthuſiaſm, and prieſt-craft:—Ye, who can violate the laws of temperance or honeſty without any painful remorſe; breaking through promiſes, oaths, and matrimonial or ſacramental engagements, as if there were no future ſtate, no ſupreme Judge, no day of retribution, no divine law enacting, that "whoſoever loveth or maketh a lie, ſhall be caſt into the lake of fire; and that the wicked ſhall be turned into hell, with all the people that forget God:"—Ye are the perſons, that I beg leave to call BAPTIZED HEATHENS: Baptiſmal water was applied to your bodies, as a figure of the grace which purifies believing ſouls. Ye received, and continue to bear a Chriſtian Name, that binds upon you the ſtrongeſt obligations you can poſſibly be under, to partake of Chriſt's holineſs, and to lead a ſober, Chriſtian life: But how oppoſite is your conduct to that of Chriſt? Alas! conſcientious *Heathens* would diſown you; and ſhall *God* own you? Shall the Searcher of hearts forgive you *immorality*, in conſideration of your *hypocriſy*? Will you live and die with ſuch *a lie in your right hand*, and upon your forehead? God forbid!—If you have not ſold yourſelves to the father of deceits for ever; pay yet ſome attention to *natural*, *moral*, and *evangelical* truths: They recommend themſelves to your ſenſes, your reaſon, and your conſcience.

1. Regard *natural* Truths. Earthly joys vaniſh like dreams. Life flies like an arrow, your friends or neighbours are daily ſeized by ſickneſs, and dragged into eternity. Death comes to terminate your deluſions, and ſet his black ſeal upon your falſe lips, your wan-

ton eyes, your rapacious hands, your luxurious palate, your ſinful, treacherous breaſt. Ere long the king of terrors will ſcrew you down in his hard couch, a Coffin: he will convey you away in his black carriage, a Hearſe: he will confine you to his loathſome dungeon, a Grave; and there he will keep you in chains of darkneſs and corruption, till the trumpet of God ſummon you to Judgment.

2. And ſay not that the doctrine of a Day of Judgment is a fable. If you do, I appeal to moral Truths. Is there not an eſſential difference between truth and falſehood, between mercy and cruelty, between honeſty and villainy? Have you, with all the pains you have taken, been able to eraſe from your breaſt the law of truth and mercy, which the righteous God has deeply engraven there? Is there not ſomething within you, that, bad as you are, forbids you to wiſh your father dead, that you may have his eſtate; and your wife poiſoned, that you may marry another? If you ſay, that theſe are only prejudices of education; I aſk, How came theſe prejudices to be univerſal? Why are they *the ſame*, even where the methods of education are moſt *contrary?* Why do they reign in the very countries, where there are neither Magiſtrates nor Prieſts; and where of courſe Politics and Prieſtcraft never bore the ſway? If your conſcience would condemn you for the above-mentioned crimes; how much more will God do it, who is the Author and Judge of your Conſcience? Does not your good ſenſe tell you, that, ſo ſure as the wonderful machine of this world did not make, and does not preſerve itſelf, there is a God, who made and preſerves it? and that this God is poſſeſſed of ten thouſand times more truth, equity, impartiality, juſtice, and power, than all the *righteous* rulers in the world. And, to ſay nothing of the checks and forebodings of your guilty conſcience; does not your reaſon diſcover, that as certain as this great God is poſſeſſed of infinite wiſdom, power, and juſtice, and has given us a moral law, he will call us to an account for our breaches of

it;

it; and that as he does not in general do it in this world, he will infallibly do it in a future ſtate?

3. If reaſon and conſcience thus lead you to religion, regard *religious* truths: They are ſupported by ſo great a variety of well-atteſted facts, by ſuch clouds of witneſſes, by ſo many aſtoniſhing miracles, and accompliſhed prophecies;—they ſo perfectly agree with the glory of our Creator, the intereſts of mankind, the laws of our nature, and the native deſires we have for immortality;—they ſo exactly coincide with our preſent, as well as future happineſs; that you cannot expoſe your unreaſonableneſs more, than by rejecting them.

What *reaſonable* objection can ye make to theſe ſcriptural directions? "Ceaſe to do evil. Learn to do good. Speak the *Truth* in *Love*. Return to the Lord. Call upon his Name." Say, "Grant to us in this world the knowledge of thy TRUTH, and in the world to come life everlaſting." Confeſs yourſelves ſinners, great ſinners: Spread this melancholy truth before the throne of divine mercy;—ſpread it with tears of undiſſembled repentance. "Except you repent, you ſhall all periſh: But, if you ſow in tears, you ſhall reap in joy."

And ſuppoſe not, that I want to drive you to deſpair. On the contrary, I declare, that dangerous as your caſe is, it is not deſperate. The Goſpel offers you a remedy. You have dealt with lying ſhadows, but you may yet embrace the eternal ſubſtance. You have wounded the Truth; but Chriſt, from whom you have the name of *Chriſtian*;—Chriſt, who ſays, "I am the Truth," has been wounded for you. You have crucified revealed truth, and the Prince of Life has been crucified in your place. I point you to his croſs, and declare, in the name of unprejudiced reaſon, that few hiſtories are ſupported by ſuch a variety of indiſputable evidences, as the wonders that redeeming Love wrought on Calvary for you.

Let not the ſcandalous falls of apoſtates, and the bad lives of nominal Chriſtians frighten you from the goſpel. Immoral and unloving men, high as their

pretenſions to faith may be, are no more Chriſtians than you. Suffer not the diſputes of profeſſors to keep you in infidelity; for they prove the truth, and not the falſehood of Chriſtianity; being expreſsly foretold. Nor ſtupidly wonder that the Serpent ſhould moſt ſpitefully bruiſe the heel of the truth that moſt powerfully bruiſes his head. Above all, be candid; be inquiſitive; apply to the *Father of Lights* for direction; and his inviſible hand will conduct you over every rock of offence, and lead you to the ſure foundation, *the Rock of ages, the* TRUTH *as it is in Jeſus.*

How near is that *Truth* to you! It always embraces mercy, and mercy now embraces you. Oh! the length and breadth, the depth and height of redeeming mercy! It ſpares you to believe;—to repent;—to live. The arms of divine Patience ſtill encircle your guilty ſoul, and bear up your mortal body above the grave. Crying as your ſins are, the cries of your Saviour's blood are yet heard above them. Provoking as your unbelief is, it has not yet provoked God to ſet upon you the ſeal of abſolute reprobation. Unſpotted Holineſs, glorious Majeſty, flaming Power, thundering Juſtice, weeping Mercy, bleeding Love;—all the divine Attributes join yet in a concert of grace and truth. You are the object of it; and the burden of their terrifying, melting accents is, "Turn ye, turn ye: Why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael? Why ſhould iniquity be your ruin? Turn! for I have redeemed you. Turn! and the ſecond death ſhall have no power over you. Turn! and you ſhall have a crown of life."

Thus, my dear fellow-ſinners, and far more earneſtly than I can deſcribe, Mercy and Truth exert themſelves in your behalf; waiting only for your conſent, to diffuſe their divine perfumes thro' your converted ſouls. This is the day of God's Power,—your goſpel-day:—This is a day of Salvation, a day of the ſpiritual jubilee, a day of the year of releaſe: Know it: improve it. Break your bonds: claim your liberty: change your ſervice: ſcorn to be the devil's

drudges:

drudges: become the servants of the Most High. The Father of the prodigal son runs to meet, to forgive, to welcome, to embrace you: And to raise your doubting hearts, he bids me impress these gracious promises upon your yielding breasts. "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, and does that which is lawful and right (and what is more lawful and right for sinners, than to repent, believe, and obey the gospel) he shall save his soul alive."—"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, for he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will *abundantly* pardon."

SECTION VII.

An ADDRESS to CHRISTIANIZED JEWS.

AND ye, Christianized Jews, will ye still be offended at our *sincerely* preaching *free grace* to *all* our fellow-gentiles? Will ye still stop your ears and cry out, "The children of Abraham, the temple of the Lord are we?" Or, in other terms, We are the little flock *necessarily* contradistinguished from the immense herd of *absolute* reprobates? Will ye still assert, "* Reprobos ideo in hanc pravitatem addictos, "quia justo et inscrutabili Dei judicio suscitati sunt "ad gloriam ejus sua damnatione illustrandum:" "*That the reprobates are devoted to wickedness, because* "*through the just and unsearchable judgment of God,* "*they were raised up to illustrate his glory by their* "*damnation?*"—Will ye still add? "* Quos vero "damnationi addicit, his justo quidem et irreprehen- "sibili, sed incomprehensibili ejus judicio, vitæ adi- "tum præcludi:" "*That by God's just and irrepre-* "*hensible, though incomprehensible judgment, the way* "*to life is blocked up for those, whom he has devoted* "*to damnation?*"—Will ye never blush to assert? "* Quos ergo Deus præterit, reprobat: neque alia "causa, nisi quod hæreditate, quam filiis suis prædes-

* These three quotations are taken from *Calvin's Institutes, Third Book.* Chap. 24. Sec. 14.—Chap. 21. Sec. 7.—Chap. 23. Secq 1.

" tinat, illos vult excludere." " *Therefore those whom* " *God passes by, he reprobates; for* NO *other reason* " *but this; He* WILL *exclude them from the inheri-* " *tance which he predestinates for his sons?*"—Will ye still call " blind," all who think, that God is *sincerely* loving to every man, without *any* exception in the day of salvation? Will ye still monopolize the Light that enlightens every man, who comes into the world? Will ye still sound the bottomless abyss of divine Mercy with your short line, and judge of the Almighty's enlarged heart by the narrowness of your own? O learn to know the God of Love, the God of Truth better. " He is not willing that ANY should perish, but that ALL should come to repentance." " He commands ALL men every where to repent: And he bids us account his long-suffering, salvation; assuring us, that the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, leadeth to repentance even those wretches, who, after their hardness and impenitent heart, treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and of his righteous judgment."

* If you will not credit God's *Word*, pay at least some regard to his OATH. " As I LIVE, says he, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn from his way and live."—Just as if he said; " By myself I swear, that I have absolutely reprobated no man. If any perish, their destruction is of themselves, and not of mercileſs decrees rashly imputed to my sovereignty. Free-agency in man, and not free-wrath in me, sinks those, who make their conditional rejection and reprobation sure, by their *unnecessary* unbelief, and *avoidable* impenitency.—Far from delighting *absolutely* in the reprobation of any one sinner, I solemnly protest, that I would *offer violence* to the *liberty* of the most obstinate, and *force* them all into heaven by the exertion of my omnipotence, if my truth as a Lawgiver, my justice as a Judge, my veracity as the Inspirer of my Prophets, my wisdom as a Rewarder, and my equity as a Punisher, did not absolutely forbid it."

Come

Come then, my prepoſſeſſed brethren, ſhew yourſelves the children of Abraham; return to the God of your Father,—the God by whom ALL the families of the earth are BLESSED in the Seed of Abraham. Think not that the Lord is only jealous of his ſupreme dominion; nor make him mercileſs towards countleſs myriads of reprobated infants, to extol the grim Sovereignty which yonr imagination has ſet up.

" Set not at odds Heaven's jarring attributes:
" Nor, with one excellence, another wound."

Allow God to be--" All o'er, conſummate, abſolute, full-" orb'd, in his whole round of rays complete," *merciful* in the day of ſalvation, and *juſt* in the day of judgment, to *every* individual of the human race. What can you poſſibly object to a doctrine ſo rational, ſo ſcriptural, ſo worthy of God?

If you complain that we make the way to heaven too broad, I aſk, Ought we not to repreſent it as broad as the Scriptures make it? Do we make it *wider* than St. Peter did, when truth and love made him diveſt himſelf of his Jewiſh prejudices, and cry out with pleaſing amaze: " Of a truth I perceive, that God is no reſpecter of perſons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted of him?" Or do we make it *narrower* than St. Paul, when he wrote, " If ye live after the fleſh, ye ſhall die: No adulterer, &c. hath *any* inheritance in the kingdom of God?"

For your own credit do not aſk, " If all men may " be ſaved thro' Chriſt, by following the light of the " goſpel-diſpenſation, which they are under, what ad-" vantage hath the Chriſtian? and what profit is there " of baptiſm and Chriſtianity?" If you make ſuch an objection, you ſhow yourſelves to be *chriſtianized Jews* indeed. The apoſtle has juſt ſaid, *If the uncircumciſion* i. e. if uncircumciſed Heathens [like Melchiſedec or Job, Cornelius or the Canaanitiſh woman] *keep the righteouſneſs of the law* according to their light, *ſhall not their uncircumciſion be counted for circumciſion?* that is, ſhall they not be ſaved as well as if they were circumciſed Jews? St. Paul ſaw, that the

the partial heart of the Jews would take fright at his doctrine; and would ſtart an objection capable of demoliſhing, if poſſible, the impartiality of God, and the freeneſs of the everlaſting goſpel. He therefore produces this formidable objection thus: If the Gentiles may be ſaved by following their light, *what advantage hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumciſion?* Rom. iii. 1. The anſwer which he gives, ſtops the mouth of all Jews, whether they live in London, Rome, or Jeruſalem: The Jews, ſays he, [and much more the Chriſtians] "have much advantage every way, chiefly becauſe unto them were committed the oracles of God." The Heathens have only the light of God's works, the light of God's providence, the light of reaſon, the light of conſcience, and the light of that ſaving grace, which has appeared to all men, teaching them to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly, and reproving them when they do not. But the Jews over and above this *five-fold* light, have the light of the Old Teſtament; and Chriſtians the light of the New.

Come then, my prejudiced brethren, let St. Paul's anſwer ſatisfy you. Get from under your parched gourd of reprobation: Let not your eye be evil, becauſe God is good; nor fret, like Jonah, becauſe the Father of Mercies extends his compaſſion, even to all the humbled Heathens in the great city of Nineveh. As the elect of God put on bowels of mercy, and ſhew yourſelves the genuine children of him, who is loving to every man, and whoſe mercy is over all his works: So ſhall your miſtakes no longer ſtraiten your minds, ſour your tempers, and ſhut your hearts againſt your "non-elected" neighbours.

And ſuppoſing you are of the happy few, in whoſe ſouls the impartial grace of God over-rules the ordinary conſequences of your partial doctrines:—Suppoſing you are *loving to every man*, and have more bowels of mercy than the God whom you extol:—Suppoſing you are *true to all men*, and ſurpaſs in *ſincerity*, the God whom you recommend, who calls all men every where to repent, and all the day long ſtretches out his

hands

hands in token of his compaſſionate love to people on whom he abſolutely fixed his immortal hatred before the foundation of the world: Suppoſing, I ſay, you have the happineſs of being ſo much better than your principles, ſo much holier than the God of your *opinions*. [*Note*; I ſay not *the God of your ſalvation*]—Then renounce thoſe *opinions*, and you will no longer countenance Antinomianiſm, deceive the ſimple, contradict yourſelves, ſhock moraliſts, and render Chriſtianity contemptible in the eyes of all, that confound it with your doctrine of *forcible* grace to hundreds, and of *forcible* wrath to thouſands.

* Should you countenance your *Jewiſh* notions by ſaying, "We are *Chriſtians*: we have nothing to do with the Heathens:" I anſwer: 1. You have far too much to do with them, when, by the doctrine which you ſo zealouſly inculcate, you ſend them, one and all, to the pit: unleſs they are brought under the Chriſtian diſpenſation. 2. You renounce the Church of England, if you diſregard them: for on Good-Friday [the day on which Chriſt taſted death for every man] ſhe enjoins us to pray thus for them: "O merciful God, who hateſt *nothing* that thou haſt made, "nor wouldeſt the death of *a ſinner*, but *rather* that "he ſhould be converted and live, have mercy upon "all Jews, Turks, Infidels and Heretics." 3. You indirectly ſacrifice the feelings of humanity, and the honour of God's perfections, to your unſcriptural doctrine, when you embrace the horrid idea of the enſured damnation of the Heathens, for the injudicious pleaſure of ſaying, "Why me! Why me!" and of teaching the poor creatures, while they ſink into the bottomleſs pit, to ſay, "Why me! Why me!"—A dreadful *Why me* this, which is not leſs offenſive to God's juſtice, impartiality, goodneſs and

* Should the perſons, whom I now addreſs, ſay, that I falſify my ſubſcriptions to the 18th Article of our Church, by aſſerting that even the Heathens, who fear God and work righteouſneſs by the general light of Chriſt's Grace, are accepted through Chriſt's unknown merits; I refer them to the 57th and 58th pages of the Vindication of Mr. Weſley's Minutes, where that objection is anſwered.

truth,

truth; than YOUR *Why me* is to his wisdom, equity, veracity and holiness. 4. If Cain was culpable for intimating, that he had nothing to do with his brother, when he had just knocked him on the head; are they praise-worthy, who enjoy with peculiar delight, and recommend with uncommon glee, "doctrines of grace" [so called] which absolutely fix the unavoidable damnation of perhaps as many millions of their unborn fellow-creatures, as Abel had hairs upon his head? And do they mend the matter, when, to vindicate their severe opinions, they calmly wipe their mouth, and say, "We have nothing to do with the Heathens?" That is, in plain English, "Our orthodoxy demands that they should inevitably perish, if they do not explicitly believe in Christ crucified, of whom they never heard: Nor do we care what becomes of them. Let them sink, provided our doctrines stand."

O my dear brethren, my heart is enlarged towards you, though your's is straitened towards the Heathens. Suffer the word of expostulation one moment more. Do not you detest the character of a stiff Pharisee? I know you do in the circumcised progeny: And why should you admire it in the baptized race? I am persuaded, that you abhor the damnatory bull of those self-elected men of old, who from the height of their orthodoxy, looked down upon their neighbours, and said, "*This people* who *knoweth not*" [what we call] "*the law, are cursed.*" And will you exemplify their uncharitable positiveness by indirectly saying, *This people*, these myriads of men, *who know not* [what we call] *The Gospel, are cursed?* Will ye turn christianized Pharisees, to countenance abandoned Antinomians?—No: the spark of candour in your breast is stirred, and almost sets fire to your prejudices. You are staggered, you are ready to yield to the force of Truth; some of you would do it even now, if you were not afraid, that our doctrine of *free grace* obscures the *Christian* dispensation, and encourages the pernicious delusions of *Antichristian Moralists*

Moraliſts. To convince you, that your fear is groundleſs, permit me to expoſtulate with them before you.

SECTION VIII.

An ADDRESS to ANTICHRISTIAN MORALISTS.

MORAL MEN, who ridicule the *Chriſtian* faith; you ſuppoſe, that your honeſty counterbalances your ſins, which by a ſoft name you call *foibles*; and for which you hope, God will never puniſh you with hell-torments. I do not deſire to make the worſt of things. I wiſh, you were as good as you fancy yourſelves to be. I wiſh, you may have been as exact in all the branches of your duty as you pretend. I would rejoice if the law of reſpectful obedience to your ſuperiors, of courteous love to your equals, and of brotherly-kindneſs to your inferiors, had always been fulfilled in your words and actions, in your looks and tempers. I am ready to congratulate you, if in all caſes ye have done to your *fellow-creatures*, exactly as ye would be done by. But permit me to aſk: If you have *fellow-creatures*, have you not a Creator? And if you have a Creator, do not reaſon, and conſcience, command you to render to him warm gratitude, cheerful praiſe, humble adoration, and conſtant obedience. But have ye done this one year, one month, one day, ONE HOUR in ALL your life?

Altho' ye are ſo ready to make us underſtand, that ye are not as other men, adulterers, unjuſt, uncharitable, hypocrites, are ye entirely ſatisfied with your own goodneſs? Nay, if ever you looked into the perfect law of liberty, and ſearched your breaſts with the candle of the Lord, can you ſay, before the omniſcient Searcher of hearts and ſpirits, that there is one of the commandments which you never broke in its ſpiritual meaning?

If upon ſecond thoughts ye cannot acquit yourſelves: and if God's dignity as a Creator, his veracity as a Lawgiver, his wiſdom as a Governor, his juſtice as a Judge, his holineſs as a GOD, forbid him to hold the guilty guiltleſs; or to forgive them in a manner incon-

inconsistent with any one of his infinite perfections: Are ye wise to despise an Advocate with him,—a divine Prophet,—an atoning Mediator? Is it prudent in you to run from the City of Refuge, to which you should fly with unabated swiftness? Do ye act a reasonable part, when ye shelter under the dispensation of the Heathens, from the blessings that pursue, and from the light that surrounds you in this Christian land? If I may allude to the mysterious divisions of Solomon's Temple; will ye obstinately remain in the Court of the Gentiles when you are graciously invited to enter into the Holy Place, with sincere Jews; yea, into the Holy of Holies, with true Christians? Think ye that, because righteous Heathens are saved without the explicit knowledge of Christ, ye may be saved upon their plan? If ye do, may the following remarks help you to see the unreasonableness of this conclusion!

1. Not to repeat the hints already given to *baptized Heathens*; I ask, Is not a grain of sincere love to Truth, the very beginning of a sincere conversion? Is that man a *sincere* lover of light, who runs away from the light of the sun and moon, under pretence that he has the light of a star? Do those people *sincerely* love money, who when they are presented with *gold* and *silver*, throw it back in the face of their benefactor, because they have some *brass?* And is that moralist a *sincere* lover of truth, who contemptuously rejects the silver truths of the Jewish dispensation, and the *golden* truths of the Christian Gospel, under pretence that he is an adept in the religion of nature, and has, what I beg leave to call the brass of Heathenism?

2. Ye talk much of the *religion of nature:* But should ye not distinguish between the religion *natural* to man in his *unfallen* state, and that which is *natural* to him in his fallen condition? Is not the regimen, which is *natural* to the healthy, *unnatural* and frequently destructive to the sick? If upright, innocent man needed not a spiritual physician, does it follow that depraved, guilty man, can do without one? Does

not

not Heathenism allow the fall and degeneracy of man? Have not some of the wisest Pagans seen, tho' darkly, the need of a mediator, and of a propitiatory sacrifice? Do ye think it prudent, so to depend upon your *own righteousness*, as to trample under foot the Jewish and Christian revelation, together with the discoveries of considerate Heathens? Does your wisdom shew itself to advantage, when it thus makes you sink below Heathenism itself?

3. No adult Heathen was ever saved without the repentance of the contrite publican. "I am a guilty, helpless sinner, totally undone, if the mercy of Him that made me, does not extend itself to me. Great Author of my existence, pity, pardon, and save me, for thy mercy's sake." Now, if ye were brought to this genuine repentance, would ye despise the light of revelation, that recommends it, and leads on to farther attainments? Think ye, that those who sincerely rejoice in the dawn of day, will readily decry morning light? Is it not therefore, much to be feared, that Pharisaism and impenitency, stand in your way to Christianity, more than respect for reason and truth? Nay, does not reason bid you assent to well-attested matter of fact? And are not the Jewish and Christian Revelations so inseparably connected with notorious events, that it is less absurd to doubt the exploits of Alexander and Cæsar, than to disbelieve the miracles of Moses and Jesus Christ?

4. The Heathens, who were saved without the explicit knowledge of Christ, far from *despising* it, as you do, *implicitly* desired it; and those, that were blessed with a ray of it, rejoiced in it like Abraham. That precious knowledge is offered to you; and, shocking to say! you reject it! you make sport with it! you pass jests upon it! you call it imposture! enthusiasm!—Oh! how much more tolerable will it be for pharisaic Heathens; yea for Chorazin and Bethsaida in the Day of Judgment, than for you, if you die under so fatal an error! And how can ye flatter yourselves, that because righteous Heathens, who have but *one* talent, shall be saved in the *faithful* improve-

ment of it; you, who have *five*, shall be saved, tho' you bury *four* of them?

"Oh! but I, for one, improve the *fifth*: I am *moral*."—God forbid, I should discountenance *morality!* I value it next to piety: nay, *true* morality is the second branch of true piety. Nevertheless, this you must permit me to say, Your morality hath either pride, impenitency, and hypocrisy at the bottom, or humility, sincerity, and truth. If it is the former, your morality, like Jonah's gourd, has a worm at its root. When the sun of temptation shall shine warmly upon you, or when death shall lay his cold hand upon you, your morality will wither, and afford you neither safety nor comfort: But, if it has sincerity and truth at the bottom; and if you are faithful; your little light will increase, the clouds raised by your prejudices will break, and you shall *see the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ*, because, like Saul of Tarsus, you do not oppose the truth maliciously, but *ignorantly in unbelief*. And Oh! may these pages convey to you the accents of that *Truth* which *shall make you free!* And may the gracious voice, which formerly thundered in the ears of the great Jewish moralist, the fierce opposer of the Christian gospel, *Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me?*—May that voice, I say, whisper to each of you, "Honestus! Honestus! why neglectest thou me? *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest:*—Jesus, who yet act a Mediator's part, between my righteous Father and thy self-righteous soul. *It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks* of my truth, and the stings of thy conscience.—I am a Sun of righteousness and truth: Wrap thyself in unbelief no more; let the beams of my grace penetrate thy frozen breast. Nor force me, by an *obstinate* and *final* denial of me before men, to fulfil upon thee the most terrible of all my threatenings by *denying thee* also *before my Father and his angels*; for, *if* YE, to whom my gospel is *fully* preached, *believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.*"

SECTION

SECTION IX.

An ADDRESS to a PENITENT MOURNER.

THOU denieſt that loving Redeemer no longer, O thou poor MOURNING PENITENT, who art ready to ſink under the burden of thy ſins, and longeſt to find reſt for thy dying ſoul. The Lord, who pronounces thee *bleſſed*, ſays, *Comfort ye, comfort ye my* mourning *people.—By whom ſhall I comfort thee?*— Oh! that it were by me! Oh! that I were ſo happy as to adminiſter one drop of goſpel-cordial to thy fainting ſpirit! Thou haſt received the *wounding truths* of the goſpel; why ſhouldeſt thou reject the *healing* ones? Thou haſt eaten the bitter herbs of repentance: yea, thou preferreſt them to all the ſweets of ſin: Why then, Oh! why ſhould thy heart riſe againſt the fleſh and blood of the true paſchal Lamb? Why ſhouldeſt thou ſtarve, when *all things are* NOW *ready?* Why ſhouldeſt thou not believe the *whole* truth, as well as *one part* of it? Will *the word of God's grace* be more true ten years hence, than it is now? Is not *Chriſt the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever?* If thy dull *believing in God* has already ſaved thee from thy vain converſation, and thy outward ſins; how much more will a cheerful *believing in the Lord Jeſus*, ſave thee into Chriſtian righteouſneſs, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt!

Do not begin to make *excuſe* and ſay, "I muſt not believe the joyous truths of the goſpel, till they are *firſt* powerfully applied to my ſoul." It is right, very right for thee, for all, never to reſt ſhort of ſuch an application. But how art thou to wait for it? In the way of duty? Or out of it? Surely in the way of duty. And is it not thy duty, no longer to *make God a liar?* Is it not thy bounden duty, as it is thy glorious privilege, to *ſet thy ſeal*, as thou canſt, to the word of God's *grace*, as well as to the declaration of his *juſtice?* Does he not charge thee to believe [tho' it ſhould be *in hope againſt hope*] the reviving *record*, *which he has given of his Son? Is* not *this the record:*

" That God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son?"—That " to as many as receive him,"—that is, " to as many as believe on his name, he gives power to become the sons of God?"—That " God commendeth his love towards us, in that when we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."—That " he was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification?"—And that he even now " maketh intercession for us;" bearing us out of hell in the arms of his mercy; and drawing all men to him who justifieth the ungodly, that renounce their ungodliness as thou hast done, and *believe in Jesus*, as I want thee to do?

If it is *a saying worthy of all men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save* even *the chief of sinners*, upon gospel terms; he undoubtedly came to save me and thee. Do not thou then foolishly excommunicate thyself from redeeming love. Away with thy unchristian, discouraging notions about absolute reprobation, præterition, non-election, &c. &c. Doubt not but thou art *conditionally* elected, that is, *chosen* IN CHRIST to eternal salvation; yea, peculiarly chosen of God *explicitly to believe in that Just One*, who *gave himself a ransom for all*, and by his one oblation of himself once offered, made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the *whole world*.—Believe then thy *election, and that of God*.—As certain as Christ hung upon the cross, flesh of thy flesh and bone of thy bone, thou art *chosen to* eternal *salvation* THRO' *sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth*. Wilt thou then be powerfully saved here, and eternally saved hereafter? Only make thy calling and election sure, *through sanctification* of the Spirit; and make sanctification of the Spirit sure, *through belief* of the *Truth*.

Believe, as well as thou canst, this comfortable, this sanctifying truth, " God so loved *the world*, that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." Be not afraid to conclude, upon the divine record, that

God

God loves *thee*, that *Chriſt gave himſelf for* THEE, and that the Holy Ghoſt will glorioufly witneſs the Saviour's love to thy ſoul. And calmly, yet earneſtly wait for a divine token, and an abiding ſenſe of this love upon thy heart.

But, I repeat it, wait in faith:—wait, believing the truth:—wait, doing *thy work*; and Chriſt will ſurely finiſh *his own*: He will ſave thee to the uttermoſt, from ſin and hell, into holineſs and heaven. Remember, that as he once bled for thee, ſo he now worketh in thee both to will and to do.—Up, then, and be doing. *Work out* thy own ſalvation with fear and trembling. Thou canſt never do God's part, and he *will* never do *thine*: Do not expect it; nor let the ſong of "finiſhed ſalvation," make thee conclude, that thou haſt nothing to do.

To *eat* or *drink* ſpiritually, and to *believe* or *receive* the truth, are goſpel-terms of the ſame import. Come then, leave all thy excuſes to thoſe, who have learned the leſſons of voluntary, tireſome humility. If the king offered thee a preſent, would it not be impertinent to make him ſtretch out his hand for an hour, under pretence that thou art not yet worthy of his bounty? And thinkeſt thou, that a ſimilar conduct is not highly provoking to the King of Kings? Does he not complain, "I called and ye refuſed: I ſtand at the door and knock: I am wet with the dew of the night: All the day long have I ſtretched my hands to a gainſaying and diſobedient people?" Come then, know thy place: Know thy God: Send thy abſurd ceremoniouſneſs back to Geneva: Crucify thy guilty fears on Calvary: and make the beſt of thy way to Sion, "the mountain where God has made unto *all* people a feaſt of fat things full of marrow, of wines well refined."

There is room, ſays the Lord: bind their ſouls with all the cords of divine and brotherly love; draw them with the bands of a man, with arguments, threatenings, promiſes, expoſtulations, *compel them to come in*. There is balm enough in Gilead, bread enough in my houſe, love enough in my heart, blood enough in the

fountain that my Son has opened for sin, grace enough in the river that flows from my throne, truth enough in the gospel of my grace, to nourish, delight, and transport, a world of prodigal sons and daughters. And is there not enough for thee, who fearest God? for thee, to whom the word of this Christian, this great salvation is sent? Did not Christ himself break the bread of consolation for thee, when he said, "Take, eat, this is my body, which is given for you?" Did he not offer thee the cup of salvation, when he added, "This is the New Testament in my blood; drink ye ALL of it," and carry it into all nations; preach it, offer it to every creature. I bring thee this bread; it came down from heaven to give life to the world: it was surely consecrated in Gethsemane, and broken on Calvary *for* THEE, *man, for* THEE, *woman, and for* THY *salvation*. Oh! if the fragments of perishing barley-bread were so to be gathered, that none of them might be lost; with what thankfulness shouldst thou receive the morsel, which I set before thee! With what hunger after righteousness shouldst thou feast upon it! How shouldst thou try to relish every crumb, every particle of gospel-truth, of the meat that endureth to everlasting life; of the word of the Lord, that abideth for ever.

Wonder at our Lord's condescension. Lest thou shouldst think, that the word of his servants is insignificant, when it is the word of truth: he *prays* particularly for them, that shall believe on him thro' their word; and he asks, How is it that ye do not discern this time of love? Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right and makes for your peace?

"O ye, that have no money, come, buy and eat, wine and milk; yea, eat and drink abundantly, O beloved, without money and without price. Hearken diligently unto me: eat ye that which is good; and let your soul delight itself in fatness," in the richest gospel-truths. Whosoever will, let him come and take of the bread and water of Life freely. Thus the water and the blood, the Spirit and the Word sweetly agree to invite thee, to chide thy delays, to bid thee

come

come and welcome to Chriſt, and to all the *unſearchable riches* of his grace.

If thou refuſeſt this drop of goſpel-cordial, this crumb of the bread of life; or if, after a faint attempt to take it, thou ſinkeſt back into thy ſtupid unbelief, I beg leave to enquire into the reaſon. 1. Is it the hour and the power of darkneſs? Is thy mind ſo confuſed, and thy heart ſo diſtracted, that in this moment thou canſt neither conſider nor welcome the truth? In this caſe, wait groaning! If thou canſt not wait in hope, believing againſt hope, endeavour at leaſt not to yield to deſpair. This ſtorm will ſoon blow over: the time of refreſhing will come, and the Lord, who permits thee to have fellowſhip with him in Gethſemane, will ſoon enable thee to triumph with him upon the mount.

2. Haſt thou little or no appetite for the truth? In this caſe, I fear, thou ſtill feedeſt upon huſks and aſhes, which ſpoil thy ſpiritual digeſtion; and I adviſe thee to exerciſe repentance; remembering that to be carnally minded is death, and that the promiſe is not made to the ſlothful; but to them, who thro' faith and patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for glory; to them who, in taking up their croſs, and denying themſelves, inherit the goſpel-promiſes.

3. Haſt thou made an abſurd covenant with unbelief, as Thomas? Art thou determined not to credit God's record, unleſs he comes down to thy terms? Doſt thou ſtill confound faith with its fruits, and God's work with thine own?—If this is thy caſe, how juſtly may the Lord ſuffer thee to go on, not only for a week, as the obſtinate apoſtle did; but for years! And after all, when thou haſt long diſhonoured God, and tormented thyſelf by thy wilful unbelief, thou wilt be glad to do upon a death-bed, what I want thee to do now. Being thus ſurrounded by threatening billows, driven from thy carnal moorings, and toſſed into true wiſdom, thou wilt without ceremony, venture upon the merits and blood of thy Saviour, and ſtrive to enter by wreſtling faith, and agonizing prayer, into righteouſneſs, peace, and joy in the

Holy

Holy Ghoſt. Happy would it be for thee in the mean time, if thou wert not wiſer in thy own conceit than ſeven men that can render a reaſon: if thou wert not obſtinately bent upon nurſing thy curſe; if thou didſt conſer with fleſh and blood no more: and if, regarding the goſpel-paſſport more than ſolifidian embargoes, and the word of God more than the diſpiriting ſpeeches of faint-hearted ſpies, thou becameſt one of the *Babes*, to whom it is our heavenly Father's good pleaſure to give the kingdom; one of the *violent* who take it by force. Thou wouldſt ſoon find, that theſe two diſpoſitions are as compatible as the two goſpel-axioms: and *receiving the end of thy faith*, thou wouldſt ſoon, perhaps to-day, taſte the powers of the world to come.

SECTION X.

An Address to Christian Believers.

YE taſte thoſe powers, happy believers, who ſee that God is Love; boundleſs, free, redeeming, pardoning, comforting, ſanctifying love in Jeſus Chriſt. The more you believe it, the more you feel it. Do then always the work of faith, and you ſhall always abound in the patience of hope, and in the labour of love. You have believed the truth, and it has made you free: Worſhip the God of Truth: Triumph in Chriſt, the living Truth: And be duly baptized with the Spirit of Truth: Beware of Enthuſiaſm; ſpeak the words of ſoberneſs and Truth: God is not the author of nonſenſe.

Sail with all poſſible care thro' the ſtraits of Phariſaiſm and Antinomianiſm. Many, by deviating from the word, have made ſhipwreck of the faith. While ſome reſt in high, Phariſaic forms; others catch at empty ſolifidian ſhadows; or ſlide into the peculiarities of a cenſorious myſticiſm, harden themſelves againſt the gentleneſs of Chriſt, and oppoſe a *part* of the truth as it is in Jeſus: Embrace ye the *whole*: Be valiant for the *whole*: Recommend the *whole*: But, above all, bring forth the fruits of the *whole*.

Be

Be ſteady: Many who believed once, as firmly as ye do, that Chriſt was a ſacrifice for ſin, conſider him now only as a martyr for the truth. And ſome, who were fully perſuaded, that God is loving to every man while the day of ſalvation laſts, now can *bear*, yea perhaps *delight* to hear it affirmed, that he is mercileſs to myriads of his unborn creatures. Be not thus carried about by a blaſt of vain doctrine, in oppoſition to the full tide of ſcripture and reaſon. Honour all men, and give double honour to thoſe to whom it is due; but be not moved from your ſtedfaſtneſs, either by names, or numbers. To judge of truth by popularity, is abſurd. Warm men, who can work upon the paſſions of the populace, will always be popular; go not then by that deceitful rule. When truth is at ſtake, mind popular applauſe as little as a ſyren's ſong; and regard a Bonner's rack as little as a Nebuchadnezzar's dulcimer. Be caſt into the furnace of perſecution with two companions, rather than bow with *thouſands* to the moſt ſhining, moſt celebrated, and the richeſt image of error. If your companions forſake you, do not forſake the truth, turn not your back upon her, when ſhe wants you moſt! Run not away from her colours, when the enemy pours in like a flood. If ſhe is driven out of the profeſſing church, follow her to the wilderneſs,—and, if need be, to the den of lions. There the God of Daniel will be with you: And thence he will bring you out: For God will ſtand by the truth, and ſhe will prevail at laſt. *Buy her* therefore, at any rate: *buy her*, tho' you ſhould give your laſt mite of wealth, and your laſt ſcrap of reputation for her: *and ſell her not*, tho' you ſhould gain the whole world by the unhappy bargain.

Theſe things, O men of God, have I written unto you concerning them that, by fair ſhows of voluntary humility, ſeduce you into Phariſaiſm or Antinomianiſm: You will often be obliged to part with *peace*, in order to maintain *truth*; but you need never part with *love*. Be you herein followers of Chriſt and St. Paul. You know that the Phariſees, the Herodians, the Saducees, and the Devil himſelf, would gladly have made

peace

peace with thoſe two Champions of the truth, upon the ſcandalous terms of betraying and giving her up. But St. Paul had not ſo learned Chriſt, and our Lord himſelf ſcorned to deny the Truth, and to worſhip the father of lies. See how calmly, how lovingly, how reſolutely they fight this good, this bloody fight of faith. They meet bonds and priſons, the bloody ſword and the ignominious croſs. And how many ſtand by them in their extremity? Have ye forgot the amazing number? "They ALL forſook him and fled:"—"ALL men forſook me; I pray God it may not be laid to their charge." And, aſtoniſhing! Judas, Peter, and Demas led the van.—O Jeſus, ſtand by our weakneſs, and we will ſtand by thy truth. Thou ſayeſt, *will ye alſo go away?* And to *whom ſhould we go*, gracious Lord; *haſt thou* not *the words of everlaſting life?* Art thou not *the light of the world* and *the life of men?* Our light, and our life? Could all the *ſtars* in thy church, ſupply the want of thy light to our ſouls? No, Lord: Be then our ſun and ſhield for ever. Viſit the earth again, thou uncreated Sun of Righteouſneſs: Haſten thy ſecond advent: Thy kingdom come! Shine without a cloud! Scatter the laſt remains of error's night! Kindle our minds into pure truth! our hearts into perfect love! our tongues into ardent praiſe! our lives into flaming obedience!

Bold may we wax, exceeding bold,
No more to Error's ways conform;
Nor ſhrink thy harſheſt *Truths* to' unfold,
But more than meet the gathering ſtorm.

Adverſe to earth's erroneous throng,
May each now turn his fearleſs face;
Stand as an iron pillar ſtrong,
And ſtedfaſt as a wall of braſs.

Give us thy might, thou God of power,
Then let, or men, or fiends aſſail:
Strong in thy ſtrength, we'll ſtand a tower,
Impregnable to earth or hell.

An APPENDIX.

Answering some Objections.

TO plead for *Error* in an Eſſay on *Truth*, would be prepoſterous. If I have done it, it has been inadvertently; and I ſhall be thankful to any of my readers, who will be at the trouble to ſet me right. But I once more beg forward diſputants, not to produce aſſertions and invectives, inſtead of arguments; and not to wire-draw the controverſy by ſtill urging objections, which I have already anſwered; unleſs they ſhew, that ſuch anſwers are inſufficient; that my arguments are inconcluſive; and the ſcriptures I quote, miſapplied. Four of thoſe objections however, deſerve a more full anſwer.

I. Should it be ſaid, "I puzzle people by aſſerting "that there can be any other ſaving faith but the "*Chriſtian* faith; and any other *object* of ſaving "faith, but *Chriſt crucified*:" I reply, that, though *Chriſt crucified* is the capital object of *my* faith, I dare not admit the *contracted* notions, that the Solifidians have of faith: becauſe, if I did, I ſhould ſubſcribe to the *neceſſary* damnation of three parts of my fellow-ſinners out of four; and reject Chriſt's word, under pretence of exalting his perſon: Take a few more inſtances of it.

Did not our Lord himſelf ſay to his diſciples, "Have faith in *God*;" diſtinguiſhing *that* faith, from faith in himſelf, as mediator, John xvii. 3 Does not St. Paul declare, that, as "believing *God*, was imputed to Abraham for righteouſneſs; ſo it ſhall be imputed to us, if we believe on *Him*, that raiſed Jeſus our Lord from the dead?" And can we read Heb. xi. without ſeeing, that the faith there deſcribed, is more general than the faith which characterizes the *Chriſtian* diſpenſation? By what art can we make appear, that Chriſt crucified was the object of thoſe believers, of whom the apoſtle ſays, "By faith Noah moved

moved with fear, built an ark :—By faith Ifaac bleſſed Jacob *and Eſau* [the ſuppoſed reprobate] concerning things to come :—By faith Jacob bleſſed the ſons of Joſeph :—By faith Joſeph gave commandment concerning his bones :—By faith the harlot Rahab periſhed not with them that believed not, when ſhe had received the ſpies? If you ſay with reſpect to Rahab, that Joſhua ſent the ſpies, whom ſhe entertained, and that they informed her, that Joſhua was a type of Chriſt crucified: will you not render your "orthodoxy" as ridiculous, as if you reſted it upon the frivolous difference there is between if and if? Mr. Berridge, cannot ſhow, that the apoſtle ever diſtinguiſhed between a Jewiſh *if*, and a Chriſtian *if*; but I can quote chapter and verſe, when I aſſert, that he clearly diſtinguiſhes between Jewiſh and Chriſtian faith. For, not to tranſcribe Heb. viii. and x; does he not ſay, Gal. iii. 23, *Before faith* [i. e. before Chriſtian faith] came, we were kept under the law, i. e. under the Jewiſh diſpenſation, and the obſcurer faith peculiar to it: Nor was this a damnable ſtate, for St. Paul begins the next chapter by telling us, that The *heir*, as long as he is a *child*, differeth nothing from a *ſervant*, though he be *Lord of all*; but is under tutors, and governors, till the time appointed of the Father: Even ſo we, when we were children [when we were under the Jewiſh diſpenſation] were in bondage under the elements of this world. But when the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we [children differing nothing from ſervants] might receive the adoption of ſons," i. e. the privileges of ſons that are of age, and are no longer under tutors and governors. "For after that (Chriſtian) *faith* is come, we are no longer under a ſchool-maſter, for we are all the [emancipated] children of God by *faith in Chriſt Jeſus*:" Gal. iii. 25, 26. Is it not evident from the comparing of theſe paſſages, that the faith of Jews conſtituted them children of God, but ſuch children as in general *differed nothing from* ſervants; ſuch children as were in a ſtate of nonage

and

and bondage; whereas *Christian* faith [emphatically called *faith*] by its superior privileges introduces true Christians into the glorious liberty of the adult sons of God?

The difference between the privileges of the Jewish, and those of the Christian faith and dispensation, is still more clearly described, 2 Cor. iii. There, the Christian dispensation [called *the ministration of the Spirit*, because *the promise of the Spirit* is its great privilege, see John vii. 39.] is opposed to the Jewish dispensation, which the apostle calls the *ministration of condemnation*, because it appointed no particular sacrifices for penitents guilty of adultery, idolatry, murder, blasphemy, &c. and absolutely doomed them to die. This severe dispensation, says St. Paul, was glorious, though it is done away: much more that which remaineth [the Christian dispensation] exceedeth in glory.—Again, Moses put a typical veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end, and until this day the veil remaineth untaken away, &c. But we (Christians) all, with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory. What a privilege! And how many *nominal* Christians live below it; yea, below the privileges of the very Heathens!

This however is the *one faith* of true Christians, who have *the same spirit of faith:* It is *one*, in its great object, *God manifest in the flesh*;—one, in its great promise, *the promise of the Father*, or *the kingdom in the Holy Ghost*;—*one*, in its new commandment, brotherly, universal love, that *perfects* believers *in one*, and makes them partakers of *so great salvation*. This is the faith, which St. Paul calls *the faith of God's elect*, i. e. the faith of Christians, who are *chosen* above Jewish believers, to *see the glory of the Lord with open face*, when Jewish believers see it only *darkly through a veil:* This very faith he calls, immediately after, the faith *common* to all Christians, *To Titus, my own son after the common faith*, Tit. i. 1, 4. With an eye to *this* faith he likewise names Ti-

mothy, his *own son in the* FAITH,—*which is in Christ Jesus:* A faith this, whereby Timothy, who was a Jewish believer from a child, was *made partaker of Christ, the great* [i. e. the Christian] *salvation.* A faith, which St. Peter calls *like precious faith*; and St. Jude, a *most holy faith*; indirectly comparing it to the *most holy place* in the temple. A faith, which Christ calls MY *faith*, Rev. ii. 13, and *faith that is in* ME, Acts xxvi. 18. A faith this, far superior to the faith of the *noble* Jewish believers in Berea, who so candidly searched the Scriptures, when they had heard St. Paul preach;—and very far exceeding the candid disposition of those sincere Heathens at Corinth, concerning whom our Lord said to St. Paul,* *I have much people in this city.* If the reader divests himself of prejudices, I hope, that, instead of calling the doctrine of the gospel dispensations, and the degrees of faith belonging to them, a "*novel chimera*," he will embrace it as a truth which leads to a thousand others.

II. Some of my opponents, who find it easier to pass a jest than to answer an argument, will probably think, that to beat me, and the doctrine of the dispensations out of the field of truth, they need only laugh at my "*inventing*" different sorts of faith "*by the dozen.*"

To nip this witticism in the bud, I declare *once more*: That I make no more difference between the faith of a righteous Heathen, and the faith of a Father in Christ; than I do between day-break, and the meridian light:—That the light of a sincere Jew, is as

* I prefer this sense to that of the Calvinists, not only because unconditional election to eternal glory appears to me an unscriptural doctrine; but because the apostle, having named the sins, in which all wicked Heathens lived, says to the Corinthians, Not such were you ALL, "but such were some of you;" intimating that others were of those righteous people, concerning whom our Lord speaks when he says, "Enquire who is worthy." Let it be observed however, that we do not rest our doctrine of free grace, upon this or upon any one scripture brought in by the bye, and rather by way of illustration than of proof. We have passages enough that are full to the point.

much

much one with the light of a ſincere Chriſtian; as the light of the ſun in a cold, cloudy day, in March, is one with the light of the ſun in a fine day in May: —And that the difference between the ſaving faith peculiar to the ſincere diſciples of Noah, Moſes, John the Baptiſt, and Jeſus Chriſt, conſiſts in a variety of *degrees*, and not in a diverſity of ſpecies; ſaving faith under all the diſpenſations agreeing in the following eſſentials: 1. It is begotten by the revelation of ſome ſaving truth preſented by free grace, impreſſed by the Spirit, and received by the believer's prevented free agency: 2. It has the ſame original cauſe in all, that is, the mercy of God in Jeſus Chriſt: 3. It *actually* ſaves all, tho' in various degrees: 4. It ſets all upon *working righteouſneſs, ſome bearing fruit thirty, ſome ſixty, and ſome a hundred fold:* And laſtly, through Chriſt it will bring all that do not make ſhipwreck of it, to one or another of the many manſions which our Lord is gone to prepare in heaven for his *believing obedient people*, i. e. for thoſe who get clear of practical *phariſaiſm* and *antinomianiſm*.

III. Should it be objected, that "The doctrine of *this* Eſſay confounds faith and works:" To what I have ſaid on this head I add; Auguſtine, the favourite father of the Solifidians, wrote a Treatiſe *(De fide et operibus)* upon faith and works, in the 21ſt chapter of which, he has theſe words: "By believing in God with a right faith, by worſhipping and knowing him we are ſo far benefited (*ut et bene vivendi ob illo ſit nobis auxilium, et ſi peccaverimus ab illo indulgentiam* MEREAMUR) as to obtain from him help to live well, and to get of him" (for I muſt not literally tranſlate the heretical word *mereamur*) "a pardon, if we have ſinned." And chap. 23. he adds "*Inſeparabilis eſt bona vita a fide quæ per dilectionem operatur: imo vero ea ipſa eſt bona vita.* A good life is inſeparable from the faith, which works by love; nay, that faith itſelf is a good life." Had I ſpoken ſo unguardedly, there would be juſt room for raiſing the objection which I prevent: But I have carefully diſtinguiſhed between faith and works; repreſenting faith as the

beating of the heart, and works as the pulſes cauſed thereby; and holding forth faith as the *root*, and works as the *fruit* of evangelical obedience.

IV. "By granting, that people, who are under "diſpenſations inferior to Chriſtianity in its ſtate of "perfection, may have a degree of ſaving faith, al-"though they have not yet the luminous faith of "Chriſtian believers; you damp the exertion of "ſeekers; and invite them to ſettle, as moſt diſſen-"ters do, in a lukewarm, Laodicean ſtate, ſhort of "the inward kingdom of God, which conſiſts not "only in *righteouſneſs*, but in *peace and joy by the* "*Holy Ghoſt*."

If this objection could not be anſwered, I would burn my Eſſay; for I had much rather, it ſhould feed my fire, than the Laodicean ſpirit, which is already ſo predominant in the church: But, that this new difficulty is by no means unanſwerable, will appear, I hope, by the following obſervations.

1. Mr. Baxter, by a variety of ſtrong arguments, ſhows, that to repreſent aſſurance, or the kingdom of God in the Holy Ghoſt, as eſſential to all true faith; and promiſcuouſly to ſhut up in a ſtate of damnation all thoſe, to whom that kingdom is not yet *come with power*, is both cruel and unſcriptural. *Confeſſion of Faith*, from p. 189 to 214.

2. Ought we to keep from thoſe, who ſincerely ſeek the kingdom of God, the comfort that the goſpel allows them? Are not they that ſeek the Lord, commanded to *rejoice?* And how can they do it if the wrath of God abideth on them, as it certainly does on *all abſolute* unbelievers? Did not our Lord and St. Peter ſpeak in a more evangelical ſtrain, when they ſaid to ſincere ſeekers, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom" of grace, as well as that of glory.—"The promiſe [of the kingdom in the Holy Ghoſt] is unto you, and to your children, and to as many as the Lord our God ſhall call to believe explicitly in Jeſus Chriſt?

3. When

3. When Joshua urged the Israelites to cross Jordan, would he have done right, if he had made them believe, that they were still in Egypt, and had not yet taken one true step towards Canaan? Did he not encourage them to go up, and to possess the good land by the very consideration, which my objector supposes would have made them sit down in the wilderness? Nay, did not those, who had already taken possession of the kingdoms of Og and Sihon, on the other side Jordan, cross that river first, and nobly lead the van, when their brethren went on from conquering to conquer? And why should not spiritual Israelites, who turn their back upon spiritual Egypt, and seek the kingdom of God, be led on *from faith to faith*, in the same comfortable manner?

4. It is trifling to say, "*Dead* Dissenters, and the *formal* Scotch Clergy, preach up a faith short of Christian assurance, and therefore such a faith is a dangerous chimera;" for if they preach it in an unguarded manner, to set aside, and not to illustrate the doctrine of Christian faith, they do the devil's work, and not the work of evangelists; what wonder is it then, that such preaching should lull their congregations asleep?—Again, if we ought not to give up the doctrine of *sincere obedience* and *good works*, though our opponents cry out perpetually, "It is the doctrine of all the carnal clergy in the kingdom:"—And if it is our duty to maintain the doctrine of the Trinity, though Dr. Priestley and all the Unitarians say with great truth, that "It is the doctrine of the superstitious Papists;" how absurd is it to urge, that our doctrine concerning a faith inferior to the faith of assurance, is false, merely because this doctrine is held by all the *sleepy* Dissenters? Might we not, at this rate, be also ashamed of the doctrine of the Divine Unity, which the Jews, and even the Turks hold as well as we?

* 5. Are there not many pious and judicious ministers, in the churches of England and Scotland, as well as among the Dissenters, who dare not countenance the present revival of the power of godliness,

chiefly becauſe they hear us ſometimes unguardedly aſſert, that none have any faith, but ſuch as have the faith of aſſurance; and that the wrath of God actually abides on all thoſe, who have not that faith? If we warily allowed the faith of the inferior diſpenſations, which ſuch divines clearly ſee in the Scriptures, and feel in themſelves; would not their prejudices be ſoftened, and their minds prepared to receive what we advance in defence of the faith of aſſurance?

* 6. If it is urged, that the Spirit of God witneſſes to all ſincere ſeekers of the kingdom of God, that they are in a damnable ſtate, till they feel the pardoning "love of God ſhed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghoſt given unto them;" I demand proof: I deny the fact, and aſſert, that the divine Spirit can no more witneſs to an *accepted*, mourning Cornelius, that he is *not accepted* in any ſenſe, than it can witneſs to a palpable contradiction. The truth is, our unbelieving fears and awakened hearts are very prone to ſurmiſe the worſt, and we are very apt to take their ſurmiſings for divine impreſſions, even when we bring forth fruits worthy of repentance. I doubt not but St. Paul himſelf, in his agony of penitential grief, when he ſpent three days and three nights in faſting and prayer, had many ſuch gloomy deſpairing thoughts; but they were certainly lying thoughts, as well as thoſe, which David wiſely checks in ſome of his Pſalms. Who will dare to ſay, that Ananias found the apoſtle in a damnable ſtate, tho' he found him without the ſenſe of ſin forgiven, as appears from the direction which he gave him, "Ariſe, why tarrieſt thou? Waſh away thy ſins, calling upon, (and conſequently *believing*) in the name of the Lord?"

7. The objection which I anſwer, may with equal propriety be urged againſt St. Peter's doctrine. Acts ii. 5, and x. 7, we read of DEVOUT *men out of every nation under heaven*, and of *a* DEVOUT *ſoldier that waited continually* on Cornelius, who himſelf *feared God, worked righteouſneſs*, and was *accepted,—with all his houſe*. By Acts xi. 9, 14, it evidently appears, though

though Cornelius *was cleanſed* by *God* himſelf, yet he muſt *ſend for Peter*, who was to *tell him words whereby he and all his houſe* SHOULD BE SAVED, i. e. ſhould become partakers of the GREAT *ſalvation* revealed by the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt. But altho' St. Peter began his diſcourſe by acknowledging, that his pious hearers *were accepted with God*, none of the congregation ſaid; Well, if we *are accepted*, we are already in a ſtate of ſalvation, and therefore we need not hear words, whereby we ſhall be ſaved. On the contrary, they all *believed* the word of *this* fuller ſalvation; for "the Holy Ghoſt fell on *all* them, that heard the word;" and St. Paul informs us, that we "receive the Spirit by the hearing of *Faith*." Compare Acts x. 44, with Gal. ii. 3, and John vii. 39. It is plain, from this account, that no preaching was ever attended with a more *univerſal* bleſſing, and that no diſcourſe was ever more inſtrumental in conveying to all, the power of the faith of aſſurance, than that very ſermon, which the apoſtle began by intimating, that his hearers were already *accepted*, according to an inferior diſpenſation. Hence it is evident, that the doctrine we maintain, if it is properly guarded, far from having a *neceſſary* tendency to lull people aſleep, is admirably calculated to excite every penitent to faith, prayer, the improvement of their talent, and the perfecting of holineſs.

* 8. May we not ſufficiently guard the *Chriſtian* diſpenſation, by conſtantly affirming: 1. That all *Chriſtian* believers *have* now *the witneſs in themſelves*. 2. That thoſe, who have it not, either never had *Chriſtian faith*, which is emphatically called *faith* in the goſpel, that they know only the baptiſm of John; or, that with the unſettled Galatians, they are actually *fallen from grace*, i. e. from the Chriſtian diſpenſation; and now live *under the law*, i. e. in the darkneſs of the Jewiſh diſpenſation: ſuppoſing they are not quite departed from God by indulging known ſin. 3. That if they do not preſs after the faith of aſſurance, they are in the utmoſt danger of loſing their talent of grace; like the young man, whom Jeſus loved,

and

and who nevertheleſs went away ſorrowful, when he was unwilling to give up all, and follow Jeſus without reſerve; or like thoſe thouſands of Iſraelites *whom the Lord* SAVED OUT OF *the land of Egypt, and* whom he *afterwards deſtroyed*, when *they believed not* the word by which they were to be *ſaved into* the land of promiſe?

* 9. Not to mention all the arguments, by which the zealous Puritans defended the doctrine of aſſurance in the laſt century, and thoſe by which the Methodiſts prove its *neceſſity* in our days; is not the firſt argument uſed in my Addreſs to the Antichriſtian Moraliſt, ſufficient to enforce the abſolute neceſſity of riſing to higher diſpenſations, when God calls us to it? If queen Vaſhti loſt her crown, for *refuſing to come* to the royal banquet, at *the king's commandment*:—If thoſe, who *begged to be excuſed*, when they were invited to the goſpel-feaſt, were at laſt dreadfully puniſhed:—If St. Paul ſays to loitering believers, who are backward to go on to perfection, "How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo *great* ſalvation, which at *firſt* began to be ſpoken by the Lord:"—Nay, if Chriſt himſelf threatens to ſpue lukewarm, ſlothful Laodiceans out of his mouth; do we want even *terrifying* arguments to laſh the conſciences of thoſe, who, hoping they are perfectly ſafe in their *low* attainments, deſpiſe *higher* diſpenſations, and *bury their talent* of grace, till it is taken from them, and given to thoſe who improve their own? To conclude,

* 10. You are afraid, that the doctrine of this Eſſay will make "*Seekers*" reſt in Laodicean lukewarmneſs; but, permit me to obſerve, that the *Seekers* you ſpeak of, are either froward hypocrites, or ſincere penitents:—If they are *froward hypocrites*, preaching to them the Faith of aſſurance will never make them either humble or ſincere. On the contrary, they will probably catch at an *election*, and then at an *aſſurance* of their own making; and ſo they will think they have the faith, for which you contend, when in fact they have only the name and notion of it. The religious world ſwarms with inſtances of this kind.

kind.—If, on the other hand, the *Seekers* for whom you seem concerned, are *sincere penitents*; far from being hurt, they will be greatly benefited by our doctrine: For it will at once keep them from chilling, despairing fears; and from false, Crispian comforts; the two opposite extremes, into which upright, unwary mourners are apt to run. Thus our doctrine, instead of being dangerous to sincere seekers, will prove a scriptural clue, in following which they will happily avoid the gloomy haunts of *pharisaic* despair, and the enchanted ground of *antinomian* presumption.

SECOND APPENDIX.

Containing, 1. Arguments to prove, that all Men universally, in the Day of their Visitation, have SOME gracious Power to believe SOME saving Truth. And, 2. an Answer to Objections.

BEING conscious that I cannot be too careful and guarded, in writing upon so important and delicate a subject, I once more attempt to explain, strengthen, and guard the Doctrine that it contains.

1. I have said that *Faith* (considered in general) *is believing heartily*; I add, *and sometimes it may signify a power to believe heartily*. For as God gives to all the Heathens in the day of their visitation, a *power to believe heartily* that *God is*, &c. indulging them with gracious calls and opportunities to use that power; we may say, that he gives them *the faith* of their dispensation. Nevertheless, all the Heathens have not that faith: For many obstinately bury their talent, till at last it is taken from them.

As this doctrine of *faith* entirely subverts the doctrine of *finished damnation*, which is so closely connected with the doctrines of *absolute election*, and finished salvation; I beg leave to add the following arguments to those which I have produced, to prove, that faith is not the work of God in the sense of our adversaries, and that in the day of salvation, through "the free gift which is come upon all men," we

have

have all some gracious power to believe some saving Truth.

* 1. If faith is the work of God in the same sense in which the creation is his performance, when Christ *marvelled at the Centurion's faith*, he marvelled that God should be able to do what he pleases, or that a man should do what he could no more help doing, than he could hinder the world from existing: That is, he marvelled at what was not at all marvellous; and he might as well have wondered that a ton should outweigh an ounce.

2. When God invites EVERY *creature in all the world* to believe, (Mark xvi. 15,) if he denies MOST of them power so to do, he insults over their wretched impotence, and acts a part which can hardly be reconciled with sincerity. What would the world think of the king, if he perpetually invited all the Irish Poor over to England to partake of his royal charity, and took care that most of them should *never* meet with any vessels to bring them over, but such as would be sure to founder in the passage.

* 3. When our Lord endeavoured to shame the pharisees for their unbelief, he said, "John came to you, and ye believed him not, but the publicans and harlots believed him: And ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterwards, that ye might believe." But if faith is the work of God in the sense of our adversaries, was it any shame to the Pharisees, that God would not do his *own* work? Had they any more reason to blush at it, than we have to redden, because God does not give us wings and fins, as he does to birds and fishes?

* 4. To suppose that Christ assiduously preached the gospel to the inhabitants of Capernaum, whilst all the time he withheld from them power to believe it, and that afterwards he appointed them a *more intolerable* damnation for not believing:—To suppose this, I say, is to cast the most horrible reflection upon the Lamb of God. But if it is allowed, that those obstinate unbelievers will justly be sent into a more dreadful hell, for having buried to the end their talent of power

to

to believe in their *ſtronger* light; is it not reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that thoſe, who ſhall go to a *leſs* intolerable hell, will alſo be ſent there, for having finally refuſed to uſe their talent of power to believe in their *weaker* light?

* 5. Although Chriſt poſitively ſays, that men ſhall be damned for their unbelief: (ſee John iii. 18. Mark xvi. 16.) yet ſome of our adverſaries deny it; being deſervedly aſhamed of repreſenting our Lord as damning myriads of men, for not doing what is abſolutely impoſſible. Hence they tell us, that reprobates ſhall be damned only for their ſins. But this contrivance does not mend the matter: For bad works, or ſins, *neceſſarily* flow from unbelief. Now, unbelief being nothing but the abſence of faith; God, by abſolutely withholding all ſaving faith, *neceſſarily* cauſes all unbelief; and unbelief, by *neceſſarily* cauſing all ſin, *neceſſarily* cauſes alſo damnation. For he that abſolutely withholds all light, *neceſſarily* cauſes all darkneſs, and, of courſe, all the works of darkneſs. Thus "*the doctrines of grace*" (ſo called) that ſeem to rear their *graceful* head to heaven, end in the *graceleſs* venomous tail of *finiſhed damnation*. "*Definit in piſcem mulier formoſa ſuperne.*"

* 6. The deſign of the Goſpel, with regard to God, is evidently to *extol his grace* and *clear his juſtice*: Now, if an abſolute decree of preterition, or limited redemption, hinders a vaſt majority of mankind from believing to ſalvation, both thoſe ends of the goſpel are entirely defeated in all that periſh: For God, by paſſing by the reprobated culprits, thouſands of years before they were born, and by withholding every dram of *ſaving grace* from them, ſhews himſelf a *mercileſs* Creator to them all. Nor does this opinion leſs horribly impeach God's *juſtice* than his *grace*; for it repreſents him as judicially ſentencing men to eternal torments, merely for the ſin of a man whom moſt of them never heard of; or, which is all one, for the *neceſſary, unavoidable, pre-ordained* conſequences of that ſin.

* 7. St.

* 7. St. Paul, in his Epiſtle to the Romans, takes particular care to clear God's juſtice with reſpect to the condemnation of the wicked, *that every mouth may be ſtopped*;—and *that they may be without excuſe*. But the ſcheme which I oppoſe, inſtead of leaving men *without excuſe*, *opens their mouths*, and fills them with the beſt *apology* in the world, "*Abſolute neceſſity and complete impoſſibility*, cauſed by another before we were born:" An apology this, which no candid perſon can ever object to.

* 8. Agreeably to St. Paul's doctrine, our Lord obſerves, that the man ſentenced to be caſt into outer darkneſs for *not having on a wedding garment was ſpeechleſs*. But if the Criſpian doctrines of grace are true, might not that man, with the greateſt propriety, have ſaid to the maſter of the feaſt, while the executioners *bound him hand and foot*, "To all eternity I ſhall impeach thy juſtice, O thou partial judge: Thou appointeſt me the hell of hypocrites, merely becauſe *I have not on a wedding garment*, which thou haſt from all eternity purpoſedly kept from me, under the ſtrong lock and key of thy irreverſible decrees: Is this the manner in which thou *judgeſt the world in righteouſneſs?*

* 9. If ſalvation depends upon Faith, and if God never gives reprobates power to *believe in the light that enlightens every man*, and a ſufficiency of means ſo to do; it follows, that he never gives them any *perſonal* ability to eſcape damnation; but only to ſecure and increaſe their damnation; and thus he deals far harder with them than he did with devils. For Satan and his angels were all *perſonally* put in a ſtate of initial ſalvation, and endued with a *perſonal* ability to do that, on which their eternal ſalvation depended. To ſuppoſe, therefore, that a majority of the children of Adam, who are born ſinful, without any *perſonal* fault of their own, and who can ſay to the *incarnate* Son of God, Thou art fleſh of our fleſh, and bone of our bone;—to ſuppoſe, I ſay, that a vaſt majority of theſe favoured creatures have far leſs favour ſhewn them than Beelzebub himſelf had, is ſo *graceleſs*, ſo *unevangelical* a doctrine, that one might be

be tempted to think, it is *ironically* called "*the doctrine of grace*;" and to ſuſpect, that its defenders are ſtiled "*evangelical* miniſters" by way of *burleſque*.

* From the preceding arguments I conclude, that when it is ſaid in the ſcriptures, people COULD NOT *believe*, this is to be underſtood, either of perſons, whoſe day of grace was over, and who of courſe were juſtly *given up to a reprobate mind*, as the men mentioned, Rom. i. 21, 28: Or of perſons, who by not uſing their one talent of power to believe the obvious truths belonging to a lower diſpenſation, abſolutely incapacitated themſelves to believe the deep truths belonging to Chriſtianity.

II. Altho' I flatter myſelf, that the preceding arguments guard the doctrine of *free-grace* againſt the attacks of thoſe who contend for *free-wrath*; I dare not yet conclude. Still fearful leſt ſome difficulty unremoved, ſhould prejudice the candid reader againſt the truth, I beg leave to anſwer three more plauſible objections to the doctrine of this Eſſay.

OBJ. V. "If *faith* is *the gift of the God* of GRACE "to us, as *ſight* is *the gift of the God* of NATURE, "does it not follow, that as we may ſee when we "will, ſo we may believe in Chriſt;—believe the "forgiveneſs of our ſins; and, by that means, fill "ourſelves with Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt "when we have a mind? But is not this contrary "to experience? Do not the beſt Chriſtians re"member a time, when they could no more believe "than they could make a world, though they prayed "for faith with all the ardor they were capable of?"

ANS. 1. You ſtill ſeem to take it for granted, that there is no true faith, but an explicit *Faith* IN CHRIST: And no explicit faith in Chriſt, but the *faith of full aſſurance*. But I hope, that I have already proved the contrary. There are two extremes in the doctrine of faith, which ſhould be carefully avoided by every Chriſtian: The one is that of the author of *Pietas Oxonienſis*, who thinks, that an adul-

terous murderer may have true, saving faith, in the height of his complicated crimes: And the other is that of Mr. Jonathan Ketlow, who asserts, there is no saving faith but that which has actually cleansed us from all inbred sin, and opened a present heaven in our breast. The path of truth lies between the opposite mistakes of those two good men; and that path I endeavour to point out.

As on the one hand, it never came into my mind that an impenitent murderer can have even the saving faith of a Heathen: So on the other hand, it never entered my thoughts, that a penitent can believe with the faith of full assurance when he will: For this faith depends not only upon our general belief of the truth revealed to us, but also upon a peculiar *operation of God*, or *revelation of his* powerful *arm*. It is always attended with a "manifestation of the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirit, that we are the children of God:" And such a manifestation, God in general grants to none but them, that groan deeply under "the spirit of bondage unto fear," as Paul did while he remained blind at Damascus;—or them that are peculiarly faithful to the grace of their inferior dispensation, and pray as earnestly for *power from on high*, as the apostles did after our Lord's ascension.

Therefore, from my asserting, that "So long as "the day of salvation continues, all sinners, who "have not yet finally hardened themselves, may day "or night [through the help and power of the general "light of Christ's *grace*, mentioned John i. 9, and "Tit. ii. 11.] receive *some* truth belonging to the "everlasting gospel," which takes in the dispensation OF THE HEATHENS; from my asserting this, I say, you have no reason to infer, that I maintain, any man may day or night believe the forgiveness of his sins, and the deep truths of *the gospel* OF CHRIST; especially since I mention immediately what truth it is, which all may believe, if they improve their talent, namely this: "There is a God, who will call us to

"an

" an account for our sins, and who spares us that we " may break them off by repentance."

2. It would be absurd to suppose, that you can believe with the *luminous faith of assurance*, when God is casting your soul into the dark prison of your own guilt, to bring down your pharisaic looks, and make you feel the chains of your sins. But even then, may you not " *believe that God is*" just, holy, and patient? May you not acknowledge, that you deserve your spiritual imprisonment far more than Joseph's brethren deserved to be put all together into ward for three days, by their loving, forgiving brother? May you not believe that, altho' heaviness may endure for a night, yet joy cometh in the morning? And when you have humbly groaned with David, " I am so fast in prison that I cannot get forth;" may you not pray in faith, " Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: Let the bones which thou hast broken rejoice: Give me the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness:" Convince me as powerfully of righteousness, as thou hast of sin: And let thy Spirit, which now acts upon me as a spirit of bondage unto fear, act as a spirit of adoption, and liberty; of righteousness, peace, and joy?—May you not even add, " O God, *I believe* thy promise concerning the coming of the Comforter; *help thou my unbelief*, and grant me such a faith as thou wilt vouchsafe to *seal with that holy Spirit of Promise*. Thou shakest before me the rod of infernal vengeance; I deserve it a thousand times; but, O Father of mercies, O *my Father*, if for the sake of thine only begotten Son, thou wilt yet permit such a wretch as I am to call thee *Father*, give me the Spirit of Adoption, and witness to my spirit, that I am a child of thine. But if thou wilt still hide thy face from me, never suffer me to entertain one dishonourable thought of thee; never let me think thee a Moloch. Though thy justice slay me, let me still trust in thee, and believe, that for Christ's sake thy mercy will revive my soul?" Is it scriptural to rank among absolute unbelievers, a penitent who thus humbly waits for the faith of full assurance,—the faith

of Chriſtianity? If our Lord pronounces ſuch mourners *bleſſed*, does it become us to pronounce them *accurſed?* But I return to your objection.

* 3. The latter part of it confirms, inſtead of overturning my doctrine; it being evident, that if the perſons you ſpeak of, prayed with ardor for the *faith* of aſſurance, they had already ſome degree of faith; for praying is calling upon the Lord, and St. Paul ſpeaks the words of ſoberneſs, where he ſays, "How ſhall they *call* upon him, in whom they have not *believed?*"

4. I am ſo far from thinking, our power to believe is *abſolute*, that I have aſſerted, "*it is impoſſible*" heartily to believe the truths, which do not ſuit our preſent ſtate:—And I have obſerved, that we ſavingly believe the "truth ſuitable to our preſent circumſtance, *when* it is kindly preſented by *free grace*, and affectionately embraced by *prevented* free-will;" adding, that when we believe, our "faith is more or or leſs operative," not only "according to the *earneſtneſs* with which we," (i. e. our prevented free-will) "welcome the truth to our inmoſt ſouls;" but alſo, "according to the *power* with which the Spirit of grace impreſſes it upon our hearts."—Nay, I have aſcribed ſo much to the power of free grace, by which ſaving faith is "inſtantaneouſly formed," as to allow that ſometimes (as at St. Paul's converſion) this power for a while bears all down before it. This was my meaning, when I ſaid, p. 104. "We may *in general* ſuſpend the act of faith, *eſpecially* when the glaring light" (i. e. the luminous power) "that ſometimes accompanies the revelation of truth, is abated." Conſider the force of the words, "*in general*," and, "*eſpecially:*" Advert to the exceptions for which they make room; and you will ſee, I allow that free-grace, AT TIMES, acts with *almoſt* as much *irreſiſtibility*, as ſome *moderate* bound-willers contend for.

* 5. With reſpect to my compariſon between our power to *believe*, and our power to *ſee*, far from ſhewing that all men may, at any time, believe the goſpel OF CHRIST, it intimates, nay, it proves the very reverſe.

reverſe. Can you ſee *when* you will, and *what* you will? Can you ſee in a dark night without a light? Can you ſee in a bright day, when a thick veil covers your face? Can you ſee if you place an opaque body full in your light? Can you ſee what is out of the reach of your eyes? Can you ſee the riſing ſun, when you look full weſt, or the ſtars when you pore upon a dunghill? Can you ſee when you obſtinately ſhut your eyes? Or when you have let a wicked man put them out, leſt you ſhould not live in idleneſs? Apply to faith theſe queries about *ſight*; recollect the preceding obſervation; and you will perceive: 1. That our power to believe is various ways *circumſcribed*; it being impoſſible, that he who has but one talent, perhaps unimproved, ſhould carry on as extenſive a trade as the man who diligently improves his five or ten talents: 2. That nevertheleſs, ſuppoſing we have ſtill a ray of the light of truth, and have not yet been given up to judicial blindneſs, or to final hardneſs, we may, day and night (if we do not ſtill bury our talent) believe, by the above-mentioned helps, *ſome obvious* truth belonging to the loweſt diſpenſation of divine grace, and begin to follow our Lord's direction; "While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of the light:" And 3. That if we oppoſe this doctrine, we begin to ſneak after our Calviniſt brethren into Criſpianity, and are juſt ready to bow at the ſhrine of *the great* Diana of the day, and to kiſs her iron-clay feet, *Finiſhed ſalvation and Finiſhed damnation*.

Obj. VI. "Your doctrine concerning the ſchool "of faith, and its ſeveral forms;—concerning the "*temple* of faith and its *partitions*, is entirely founded upon the doctrine of the *diſpenſations* of divine "grace; a doctrine this, which many people will "rank with what they call, "*The novel chimeras of* "*your Checks.*"

I have proved what I have advanced concerning the diſpenſations, by arguments founded upon ſcripture, reaſon, and conſcience. However, that the novelty

novelty may not ſtand in the way of any of my readers, out of fifty authors whom I might quote in ſupport of this important doctrine, I ſhall produce only two, a calviniſt and an anti-calviniſt; not doubting but their conſentaneous teſtimony will ſufficiently break the force of your objection. The firſt is the Rev. Mr. Green, late curate of Thurnſcoe in Yorkſhire, and once an aſſiſtant to Mr. Whitefield. In his book, called *Grace and Truth vindicated*, p. 116, you will find the following juſt remarks:

"It appears to me from *ſcripture*, as well as *experience*, that there are divers diſpenſations, but the ſame ſpirit: *The kingdom of heaven conſiſts of various degrees, and different manſions.* This is true, whether by the kingdom of heaven we underſtand the outward profeſſors of religion and their privileges, the inward kingdom of grace, or the kingdom of glory: (in all which ſenſes the words in ſcripture are frequently uſed.)—As face anſwers to face in a glaſs, ſo do theſe reſpectively anſwer each other. Thus the outward privileges of religion from Adam to Moſes were *leaſt*; from Moſes to Chriſt *greater*, and from Chriſt to the reſtitution of all things, *greateſt*.—Again, to be a ſpiritual or *enlightened* HEATHEN, as Socrates, Plato, or Cornelius before he heard Peter, is one degree or diſpenſation of grace. To be a ſpiritual or *enlightened* JEW; and with Peter and the other diſciples before the day of pentecoſt, to believe and acknowledge, that Jeſus is the Meſſiah, tho' not *ſpiritually* come, is a greater. But to be a *ſpiritual* CHRISTIAN, to have Chriſt, the exalted God-man revealed in us from heaven, and to be ſealed with the Holy Spirit of promiſe unto the day of the redemption of this vile body, is the laſt and moſt perfect diſpenſation of grace. He that is feeble here, ſhall be as David, and he that is ſtrong, &c. ſhall be, &c. as the angel of the Lord, &c. For it may be obſerved, that every diſpenſation admits of a growth therein; and moreover, that each of them is in ſome ſort and degree, experienced by a ſpiritual Chriſtian, &c."

My

My second witness is the Rev. Mr. J. Wesley, who even in his first Sermon on *Salvation by Faith*, preached near forty years ago, clearly distinguishes Christian faith properly so called, or *faith in Christ* glorified, not only from the faith of a Heathen, but also from the faith of initial Christianity, i. e. "the faith which the apostles had while our Lord was upon earth."

"And first," says he, "it" [the faith that saves us into the great salvation described in the second part of the sermon] "is not barely the faith of a Heathen. Now God requires of a Heathen to believe, "That God is, that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, &c. by glorifying him as God," &c. and by a careful practice of moral virtue, &c. A Greek or Roman, therefore, yea, a Scythian or Indian, was without excuse, if he did not believe thus much; the Being and Attributes of God, a future state of reward and punishment, &c. For this is barely *the faith of a Heathen*."—Soon after he adds, "And herein does it" [this faith in Christ glorified] "differ from that faith, which the apostles themselves had while our Lord was upon earth, that it acknowledges the necessity and merit of his death, and the power of his resurrection."

The doctrine of *Christian* Perfection is entirely founded on the privileges of the *Christian* dispensation in its fulness: privileges these, which far exceed those of the Jewish œconomy, and the baptism of John. Accordingly, Mr. Wesley in his sermon on *Christian Perfection*, makes the following just and scriptural distinction between those dispensations: "It may be granted, 1. That David, in the general course of his life, was one of the holiest men among the Jews. And, 2. That the holiest men among the Jews, did sometimes commit sin. But if you would hence infer, that all Christians do, and must commit sin, as long as they live: this consequence we utterly deny. It will never follow from those premisses. Those who argue thus, seem never to have considered that declaration of our Lord, Mat. xi. 11, "Verily I say unto

you,

you, among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist. Notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." I fear indeed, there are some, who have imagined *the kingdom of heaven* here, to mean the kingdom of glory: As if the Son of God had just discovered to us, that the least glorified saint in heaven is greater than any man upon earth! To mention this is sufficiently to refute it. There can therefore no doubt be made, but *the kingdom of heaven* here (as in the following verse, where it is said to be *taken by force*) or *the kingdom of God*, as St. Luke expresses it, is the kingdom of God on earth, whereunto all true believers in Christ, all real Christians, belong. In these words then, our Lord declares two things. 1. That before his coming in the flesh, among all the children of men, there had not been one greater than John the Baptist: Whence it evidently follows, that neither Abraham, David, nor any Jew was greater than John. 2. That he who is least in the kingdom of God (in that kingdom, which he came to set up on earth, and which the violent now began to *take by force*) is greater than he. Not *a greater prophet* (as some have interpreted the word) for this is palpably false in fact: But greater in the grace of God, and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore we cannot measure the privileges of real Christians, by those formerly given to the Jews. *Their ministration* (or dispensation) we allow *was glorious*; but ours *exceeds it in glory*. So that whosoever would bring down the Christian dispensation to the Jewish standard, &c. doth *greatly err, neither knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.*"—From these excellent quotations, therefore, it appears, that you do me an honour altogether undeserved, if you suppose, that I first set forth the doctrine of the dispensations.

OBJ. VII. "I cannot help thinking, that the doc-
" trine of a faith proper to all those dispensations, is
" above the capacity of *plain Christians* and should
" never be mentioned, lest it should puzzle, instead
" of edifying the church."

If

If your fears are well grounded, even the Apoſtle's Creed is above the capacity of plain Chriſtians: For that creed, the ſimpleſt of all thoſe which the primitive Church has handed down to us, evidently diſtinguiſhes three degrees of faith: 1. *Faith in God the Father Almighty, who made heaven and earth*, which is the faith of the Heathens: 2. *Faith* in the Meſſiah, or *in Jeſus Chriſt his only begotten Son our Lord*; which is the faith of pious Jews, of John's diſciples, and of imperfect Chriſtians, who, like the apoſtles before the day of pentecoſt, are yet ſtrangers to the * great

* I beg the reader would not miſtake me. When I ſay that pious Jews, and our Lord's diſciples before the day of Pentecoſt, were ſtrangers to the great out-pouring of the Spirit, I do not mean that they were ſtrangers to his directing, ſanctifying, and enlivening influences, according to their diſpenſation. For David had prayed, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me:" John the Baptiſt had been viſited by his exhilerating power, even in his mother's womb: Our Lord had "breathed upon his diſciples, ſaying, Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt;" and had imparted to them a *Spirit of grace and ſupplication*, to help them to wait in faith and unceaſing prayer, "till they were endued with power from on high:" Beſides, they had called him *Lord* in truth; and no man can do this, *but by the Spirit of faith*, which *helps our unbelief and infirmities* under all the divine diſpenſations. Nevertheleſs they were not fully baptized. The Comforter, that viſited them, did not properly dwell in them. Altho' they had already wrought miracles by his power, *the Promiſe of the Father* was not yet fulfilled to them. They had not yet been *made perfect in one*, by the aſſimilating operation of the heavenly fire. They would have been puzzled by ſuch queſtions as theſe: "Have ye received the Holy Ghoſt ſince ye believed?" Acts xix. 2.—"Is he fallen upon you?" Acts x. 44.—"Is the love of God ſhed abroad in your heart by the Holy Ghoſt given unto you?"—Is the Fountain ſpringing up into everlaſting life open in your breaſt?" John iv. 14.—"After that ye believed, were ye ſealed with that Holy Spirit of promiſe?" Eph. i. 13.—That *Spirit*, which forms thoſe *rivers of living water*, that *flow out of the belly*, the inmoſt ſoul *of believers?*—That *Spirit* which *was not given* before *Chriſt was glorified?* John vii. 39.—That *Comforter*, which it is more *expedient* for us to receive, than even to have Chriſt's bodily preſence, and conſtant inſtructions? John xvi. 7.—If theſe, and the like queſtions would have perplexed the apoſtles before Chriſt had opened his ſpiritual baptiſm, and ſet up his kingdom with power in their hearts; we ought not to be ſurpriſed, that profeſſors, who know only the baptiſm of John, ſhould

great out-pouring of the Spirit: And 3. *Faith in the Holy Ghoſt*,—Faith in the operation of God, by which Chriſtians believe *according to the working of God's Almighty power*, and are *filled with righteouſneſs, peace, and joy, in* THUS *believing*.

That the diſtinction of the three degrees of ſaving faith omitted in the Athanaſian Creed, but expreſſed in the Apoſtle's Creed, and in the Nicene Creed;—That this diſtinction, I ſay, is neither chimerical nor enthuſiaſtical, may be proved by a variety of arguments, two or three of which, I hope, will not intrude too long upon the Reader's patience.

1. The firſt is taken from the doctrine expreſsly laid down in the New Teſtament. To what I have ſaid on this head, I add here what Chriſt ſaid to his diſciples, "Ye believe in GOD, believe alſo in ME." Here the moſt prejudiced may ſee, that faith in the FATHER is clearly contradiſtinguiſhed from faith in the SON. As for faith in the HOLY GHOST, ſee in what manner our bleſſed Lord ſowed the ſeeds of it in the hearts of his diſciples. "When the Comforter is come, whom I will ſend unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, he ſhall teſtify of me.—It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart I will ſend him unto you.—Behold I ſend the Promiſe of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jeruſalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Nor was this great promiſe made to the apoſtles alone; for, "In the laſt day, that great day of the feaſt, Jeſus ſtood and cried, ſaying, If *any man* [not if an apoſtle] thirſt, let him come to me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the ſcripture hath ſaid, out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water.

ſhould ingenuouſly confeſs, they never heard there was a Holy Ghoſt (to be received) ſince they believed, Acts xix. 2. Nor ſhould we wonder if devout Jews, and eaſy Laodiceans did even *mock and ſay*, you would have us to be filled with NEW wine; but we are rich and increaſed with goods, and have need of nothing. The water of our old ciſtern is preferable to the *new wine* of your enthuſiaſtical doctrine, and our baptiſmal ponds to your baptiſmal flames.

But

But this he ſpake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him ſhould receive: for the Holy Ghoſt was not yet given; [his diſpenſation, which is the higheſt of all, was not yet opened] becauſe that Jeſus was not yet glorified." And the opening of this diſpenſation in our hearts requires on our part, not only faith in Chriſt, but a peculiar faith in "the Promiſe of the Father;" a faith this, which has the *Holy Ghoſt* for its great object.

2. My ſecond argument is taken from the *experiences* of thoſe, who, by the Holy Spirit were made partakers of Chriſt glorified, either on the day of Pentecoſt, or after it; and could feelingly confeſs, Chriſt dying *for us*, and Chriſt living *in us*, *the hope of glory*. Acts ii. 5, we read of *devout men out of every nation under heaven*, who were come to worſhip at Jeruſalem. But how could they have been *devout men*, if they had not *believed in* GOD? What could have brought them from the ends of the earth to keep a feaſt to the Lord, if they had been mere atheiſts? And yet it is evident, that through prejudice many of them rejected our Lord; putting him to open ſhame, and a bloody death: But when Peter preached Chriſt on the day of Pentecoſt, they at firſt believed on him with a true, tho' not with a luminous faith. This appears from the anguiſh, which they felt upon being charged with having *ſlain the Prince of life*. No man in his ſenſes can be *pricked to the heart* merely for having had a hand in the juſt puniſhment of an impoſtor, and a blaſphemer, who *makes himſelf equal with God*. If, therefore, keen remorſe pierced the hearts of thoſe penitent Jews, it is evident, that they looked no more upon Chriſt as an *impoſtor*, but already believed in him as the *true Meſſiah*.

No ſooner had they thus paſſed from faith in the Father, to an explicit faith in the Son, but they cried out, "What ſhall we do?" And Peter directed them to make by baptiſm an open, ſolemn profeſſion of their faith in Chriſt, and to believe the great promiſe concerning the Holy Spirit. "The promiſe is unto you, (ſaid he:) Be baptized, *every one of you*, in the name of

of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and ye [every one of you] shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." And upon their *gladly receiving the word*; i. e. upon their heartily believing the promise relating to pardon and to the Comforter; and, no doubt, upon their fervently praying, that it might be fulfilled in them; *they were filled with the Spirit:* all their hearts overflowed with righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

St. Peter speaking (Acts xi.) of a similar out-pouring of the Spirit, says, "The Holy Ghost fell on them [Gentiles] as on us [Jews] at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water [them that entered his dispensation] but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost," when you shall enter the full dispensation of my Spirit:—"God (adds Peter) gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ."—And "when the apostles heard these things, they glorified God; [not indeed by shouting, "Then hath God given the Gentiles power to speak Arabic:" but by] saying, then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life," according to the fulness of the Christian dispensation.

That this dispensation of the Holy Spirit, this coming of Christ's spiritual kingdom with power, is attended with an uncommon degree of sanctifying grace, is acknowledged by all: And that the gift of tongues, &c. which at first on *some* occasions, and in *some* persons, accompanied the baptism of the Spirit, for a sign to bigoted Jews, or to stupid Heathens:—that such a gift, I say, was a *temporary appendage*, and by no means an *essential part* of Christ's spiritual baptism, is evident from the merely spiritual effect, which the receiving of the Holy Ghost had upon the penitent Jews, who, being *born of the Spirit*, pressed after the apostles into the kingdom of God on the day of Pentecost.

"Even in the infancy of the church, (says an eminent divine) God divided those (*miraculous*) gifts with a sparing hand. *Were all* even then *prophets?* Were

all

all workers of miracles? Had all the gifts of healing? Did all ſpeak with tongues? No, in no-wiſe. Perhaps not one in a thouſand. Probably none but the teachers of the church, and only ſome of them. It was therefore for a more excellent purpoſe than this, that *they* [the brethren and apoſtles] *were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt.* It was to give them (what none can deny to be eſſential to all Chriſtians in all ages) *the mind which was in Chriſt*, thoſe holy *fruits of the Spirit*, which whoſoever has not, is none of his; to fill them with *love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodneſs.*

* It is very remarkable, that altho' 3000 converts *received the gift of the Holy Ghoſt* on the memorable day in which Chriſt opened the diſpenſation of his Spirit, no mention is made of ſo much as *one* of them working a *ſingle* miracle, or ſpeaking with *one* new tongue. But the greateſt and moſt beneficial of miracles was wrought upon them all: For, "all that believed, (ſays St. Luke) were together; continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, breaking bread from houſe to houſe, eating their meat with gladneſs and ſingleneſs of heart, praiſing God, and having favour with all the people," by their humble, affectionate, angelical behaviour. Or, as the ſame hiſtorian expreſſes it, Acts iv. 32. "The multitude of them that believed"—ſpoke Greek and Latin!—No, but,—"were of *one* heart, and of *one* ſoul: neither ſaid any of them, that ought of the things which he poſſeſſed was his own: But they had all things common:" Having been made perfect in one, agreeably to our Lord's deep prayer, recorded by St. John: "Neither pray I for theſe [my diſciples] alone, but for *them* alſo, who ſhall believe on me thro' their word, That they may be *one*:—I in them [by my Spirit] and thou in me, that they may be made *perfect in one.*"

END OF THE ESSAY ON TRUTH.

THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE AND JUSTICE

EQUALLY

ESSENTIAL TO THE PURE GOSPEL:

WITH

SOME REMARKS

ON THE MISCHIEVOUS DIVISIONS

CAUSED AMONG CHRISTIANS BY PARTING

THOSE DOCTRINES.

BEING

An Introduction to a Plan of Reconciliation between the Defenders of the Doctrines of *partial Grace*, commonly called *Calvinists*; and the Defenders of *impartial Justice*, commonly called *Arminians*.

By JOHN FLETCHER,

Vicar of *Madeley*, SALOP.

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THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE and JUSTICE, &c.

SECTION I.

A plain account of the goſpel in general, and of the various diſpenſations, into which it branches itſelf.—The goſpel holds forth the doctrines of Juſtice, *as well as the doctrines of* Grace. *An oppoſition to this capital truth gave riſe to the controverſy about the Minutes.—An anſwer to an objection of thoſe, who ſuppoſe, that the goſpel conſiſts only of doctrines of* Grace.

IF a judicious mariner who has ſailed round the world, ſees with pleaſure and improvement a map, which exhibits in one point of view, the ſhape and proportion of the wide ſeas, in croſſing of which he has ſpent ſome years: a judicious proteſtant may profitably look upon a doctrinal map [if I may be allowed the expreſſion] which places before him in diminutive proportion, the windings of a controverſy,

which, like a noiſy impetuous torrent, has diſturbed the churches of Chriſt for fourteen hundred years, and carried religious deſolation through the four parts of the globe: but more eſpecially if this map exhibits with ſome degree of accuracy, the boundaries of truth, the crooked ſhores of the ſea of error, the haven of peace, and the rocks rendered famous by the doctrinal wrecks of myriads of unwary Evangeliſts. Without any apology therefore, I ſhall lay before the reader a plain account of the primitive catholic goſpel, and its various diſpenſations.

The goſpel, in general, is a divine ſyſtem of truth, which [with various degrees of evidence] points out to ſinners the way of eternal ſalvation, agreeable to the mercy and juſtice of a holy God; and therefore the goſpel in general, is an aſſemblage of holy doctrines of Grace, and gracious doctrines of Juſtice. This is the idea, which our Lord himſelf gives us of it, in Mark xvi. 16. For though he ſpeaks there of the peculiar goſpel-diſpenſation, which he opened, his words may, in ſome ſenſe, be applied to every goſpel-diſpenſation. *Preach the goſpel.—He that believeth* [in the light of his diſpenſation, ſuppoſing he does it *with the heart unto righteouſneſs*] *ſhall be ſaved*, according to the privileges of his diſpenſation: here you have a holy doctrine of Grace: *but he that believeth not ſhall be damned:* here you have a gracious doctrine of Juſtice. For [ſuppoſing man has a gracious capacity to believe in the light of his diſpenſation] there is no Antinomian grace in the promiſe, and no free-wrath in the threatening, which compoſe what our Lord calls the goſpel: but the conditional promiſe exhibits

hibits a righteous doctrine of Grace, and the conditional threatening displays a gracious doctrine of Juſtice.

The goſpel, in general, branches itſelf out into four capital diſpenſations, the laſt of which is moſt eminently called the goſpel, becauſe it includes and perfects all the preceding diſplays of God's grace and juſtice towards man. Take we a view of theſe four diſpenſations, beginning at the loweſt, viz. Gentiliſm.

I. Gentiliſm [which is frequently called natural religion, and might with propriety be called the goſpel of the Gentiles] Gentiliſm, I ſay, is a diſpenſation of Grace and Juſtice, which St. Peter preaches and deſcribes in theſe words: *In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteouſneſs* [according to his light] *is accepted of him:* theſe words contain an holy doctrine of Grace, which is inſeparably connected with this holy doctrine of Juſtice: *In every nation he that feareth* not *God, and worketh* not *righteouſneſs* [according to his light] *is* not *accepted of him.*

II. Judaiſm, which is frequently called the Moſaic diſpenſation, or the law, that is, [according to the firſt meaning of the Hebrew word תורה, the doctrine, or the inſtruction] and which might with propriety be called the Jewiſh goſpel;—Judaiſm, I ſay, is that particular diſplay of the doctrines of Grace and Juſtice, which was chiefly calculated for the meridian of Canaan, and is contained in the Old Teſtament; but eſpecially in the five books of Moſes. The prophet Samuel ſums it all up in theſe words, *Only fear the Lord, and ſerve him in truth with all your heart* [according to the law, i. e. doctrine of Moſes] *for conſider how great things he hath done for you*

[his peculiar people :] *but if ye ſhall ſtill do wickedly, ye ſhall be conſumed,* 1 Sam. xii. 24. In this goſpel-diſpenſation alſo, the doctrine of Grace goes hand in hand with the doctrine of Juſtice. Every book in the Old Teſtament confirms the truth of this aſſertion.

III. The Goſpel of John the Baptiſt, which is commonly called the baptiſm of John, in connexion with the goſpel, or baptiſm, which the Apoſtles preached, before Chriſt opened the glorious baptiſm of his own ſpirit on the day of Pentecoſt; this goſpel-diſpenſation, I ſay, is the Jewiſh goſpel improved into infant-chriſtianity. Or, if you pleaſe, it is chriſtianity falling ſhort of that indwelling power from on high, which is called *The kingdom of God come with power.* This goſpel is chiefly found in the four goſpels. It clearly points out the perſon of Chriſt, gives us his hiſtory, holds forth his mediatorial law; and, leading on to the perfection of chriſtianity, diſplays with increaſing light: (1) The doctrines of Grace, which kindly call the chief of ſinners to eternal ſalvation through the practicable means of repentance, faith, and obedience: and (2) The doctrines of Juſtice, which awfully threaten ſinners with deſtruction, if they finally neglect to repent, believe, and obey.

The capital difference between this goſpel-diſpenſation, and the Jewiſh goſpel, conſiſts in this: The Jewiſh goſpel holds forth Chriſt about to come, in types and prophecies; but this goſpel diſplays the fulfilment of the Jewiſh prophecies, and without a typical veil points out Chriſt already come. Again: The political part of the Jewiſh goſpel admits of ſome temporary indulgences,

gences, with reſpect to divorce, the plurality of wives, &c. which indulgences are repealed in the chriſtian inſtitution, where morality is carried to the greateſt height, and inforced by the ſtrongeſt motives. But, on the other hand, the ceremonial part of the goſpel of Chriſt grants us many indulgences with reſpect to ſabbaths, feſtivals, waſhings, meats, places of worſhip, &c. For it binds upon us only the two unbloody ſignificant rites, which the ſcriptures call Baptiſm and the Lord's-ſupper; freeing us from ſhedding human blood in circumciſion, and the blood of beaſts in daily ſacrifices: an important freedom this, which St. Paul calls *The* [ceremonial] *liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free*, and for which he ſo ſtrenuouſly contends againſt the judaizing preachers, who would bring his Galatian converts under the bloody yoke of circumciſion, and Jewiſh bondage.

IV. The [perfect] goſpel of Chriſt is frequently called the goſpel only, on account of its fulneſs, and becauſe it contains whatever is excellent in the above-deſcribed goſpel-diſpenſations. We may truly ſay therefore, that perfect chriſtianity, or the complete goſpel of Chriſt, is gentiliſm, judaiſm, and the baptiſm of John, arrived at their full maturity. This perfected goſpel, is found then, initially in the four books, which bear the name of goſpel, and perfectively in the Acts of the Apoſtles, and the Epiſtles. The difference between this perfected goſpel, and the goſpel, which was preached before the day of Pentecoſt, conſiſts in this capital article: before that day, our Lord and his forerunner, John the Baptiſt, foretold, that Chriſt ſhould baptize with the Holy Ghoſt; and Chriſt promiſed

miſed the indwelling Spirit. He ſaid, *He dwelleth with you, and ſhall* [then] *be in you.—Ye ſhall be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt not many days hence.* But the full goſpel of Chriſt takes in the full diſpenſation of Chriſt's Spirit, as well as the full hiſtory of Chriſt's life, death, and reſurrection; comprehending the glad news of the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, as well as the joyful tidings of the aſcenſion of the Son: and therefore, its diſtinguiſhing character is thus laid down by St. Peter, *Jeſus, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, he hath ſhed forth this, which ye now ſee and hear. The promiſe is unto you* [that repent and believe.] *We are his witneſſes of theſe things, and ſo is alſo the Holy Ghoſt, whom God* [ſince the day of Pentecoſt] *hath given to them, that obey him*: for before Chriſt's aſcenſion, the Evangeliſts could ſay, *The Holy Ghoſt is not yet given* [in its chriſtian fulneſs] *becauſe Chriſt is not yet glorified* Compare Acts ii. 33. &c. with Acts v. 32, and John vii. 39.

This goſpel is the richeſt diſplay of divine grace and juſtice, which takes place among men in the preſent ſtate of things. For Chriſt's ſake the Holy Ghoſt is given as an indwelling, ſanctifying Comforter. Here is the brighteſt doctrine of Grace! He is thus given to them that obey: and, of conſequence, he is refuſed to the diſobedient. Here is the higheſt doctrine of Juſtice, ſo far as the purpoſe of God, according to the elections of grace and juſtice, actually takes place in this life, before the ſecond coming of Chriſt. Theſe two laſt clauſes are of peculiar importance.

(1) I ſay

(1) I ſay in this life, becauſe, after death, two great diſpenſations, of grace and juſtice, will yet take place, with reſpect to every man: the one in the day of death, when Chriſt will ſay to each of us, *Thou ſhalt be with me in paradiſe*, or, *Thou ſhalt go to thy own place:* and the other, in the day of judgment, when our Lord will add, *Come, ye bleſſed*, or, *Go, ye curſed.* Then ſhall the goſpel-myſtery of God, which equally diſplays the doctrines of Grace and of Juſtice, be fully accompliſhed.

(2) I have added the cauſe before the ſecond coming of Chriſt, becauſe in the Pſalms, Prophets, Acts, Epiſtles, and eſpecially in the Revelation, we have a variety of promiſes, that, *in the day of his* diſplaying *power*, Chriſt will *come in his glory, to judge among the heathen, to wound even kings in the day of his wrath*, to *root up the wicked*, to *fill the places with their dead bodies*, to *ſmite in ſunder* Antichriſt, and *the heads over divers countries*, and to *lift up his* triumphant *head* on this very earth, where he once *bowed his* wounded *head, and gave up the ghoſt.* Compare Pſalm cx. with Acts i. 11.—2 Theſſ. i. 10—Rev. xix. &c. In that great day, another goſpel-diſpenſation ſhall take place. We have it now in prophecy, as the Jews had the goſpel of Chriſt's firſt advent: but when Chriſt ſhall *come to deſtroy the wicked, to be* [actually] *glorified in his ſaints, and admired in all them that believe*;—*in that day*, miniſters of the goſpel ſhall no more propheſy, but, ſpeaking a plain hiſtorical truth, they ſhall lift up their voices as *the voice of many waters and mighty thunderings, ſaying, Allelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth,—the marriage of the Lamb is come,—his wife* [the church of the firſt-born] *has*

has made herſelf ready:—Bleſſed and holy is he, that has part in the firſt reſurrection;—he reigns with Chriſt a thouſand years.—Bleſſed are the meek, for they do inherit the earth.—The times of refreſhing are come, and he has ſent Jeſus Chriſt who, before was preached unto you; whom the heaven did receive till this ſolemn ſeaſon. But now are come *the times of reſtitution of all things, which God hath ſpoken by the mouth of all his holy Prophets, ſince the world began*, Rev. xix. 20. Matt. v 5. Acts iii. 19, &c. May the Lord haſten this goſpel-diſpenſation! And, till it take place, may *the Spirit and the Bride ſay, Come!*

This being premiſed, it will not be difficult to give the reader a juſt idea of the grand controverſy, which has torn the churches of Chriſt, from the days of *Auguſtine* and *Pelagius*, and which has lately been revived among us, on the following occaſion.

In the year 1770, Mr. *Weſley* [in the Minutes of a Conference, which he held with the preachers in his connection] advanced ſome propoſitions the manifeſt tendency of which is to aſſert, that the doctrines of Juſtice are an eſſential part of the goſpel; and that, when we have been afraid to preach them, as well as the doctrines of Grace, we have been partial diſpenſers of the truth, and have leaned too much towards Calviniſm: that is, towards a ſyſtem of doctrine, which in a great degree, explains away the doctrines of Juſtice, to make more room for the doctrines of Grace.

Some good people, who imagined that the doctrines of impartial Juſtice have little or nothing to do with the goſpel, were not only highly diſpleaſed with Mr. *Weſley's* propoſitions, but greatly

greatly alarmed at the word merit, which lie warily uſed in one of them, to intimate that the doctrines of Juſtice, and the day of judgment muſt fall to the ground, if every kind of merit or deſert is baniſhed from the goſpel; Juſtice being a virtue which, from an impartial tribunal, *renders to every man according to his works*, that is, according to his worthineſs or unworthineſs, or, as ſome expreſs it, according to his merit or demerit.

A regard for the doctrines of Juſtice, and a fear leſt Antinomian doctrines of grace, and dreadful doctrines of free-wrath, ſhould be ſtill entertained by my friends, as the genuine doctrines of grace, engaged me to vindicate thoſe obnoxious propoſitions, or rather, the doctrines of Juſtice, held forth therein. And this, I hope, I have done, in a ſeries of Checks to Antinomianiſm—or of tracts againſt an unſcriptural doctrine of grace,—a doctrine of Grace, torn from the ſcripture-doctrine of Juſtice. In order to reſcue the doctrines of Juſtice, I have endeavoured to prove that no man is born an abſolute reprobate in Calvin's ſenſe of the word; that God is loving to every man, for Chriſt's ſake; and that of conſequence, there is a goſpel-diſpenſation for every man, though it ſhould be only that which is called Gentiliſm. I have ſhewn the cruelty of thoſe opinions, which directly or indirectly doom to eternal perdition all the heathens, who never read the law of Moſes, or heard the goſpel of Chriſt. I have evinced, by a variety of arguments, that nothing can be more unſcriptural than to repreſent the law of Moſes [i. e. the Jewiſh goſpel] as a graceleſs doctrine of juſtice; and the law of Chriſt [or the Chriſtian goſpel] as

as a lawleſs doctrine of grace. By this means I have defended, ſo far as lay in me, both the Jewiſh doctrines of grace, and the Chriſtian doctrines of Juſtice. And by demonſtrating, that the ſcripture-doctrines of Grace are inſeparably connected with the ſcripture-doctrines of Juſtice, I flatter myſelf to have opened the way for the re-union of the two partial goſpels of the day; the capital error of which conſiſts either in excluding the doctrines of Grace from the doctrines of Juſtice, which is the error of all rigid free-willers;—or in excluding the doctrines of Juſtice from the doctrines of Grace, which is the miſtake of all rigid bound-willers.

"What," [ſays one of theſe partial defenders of the doctrines of Grace] "Will you ſtill perſiſt to legalize the goſpel? Do you not know, that the word Goſpel, in the original, means good news, or a good meſſage, and therefore muſt denote doctrines of Grace abſtracted from all ſeverity of what you call the doctrines of Juſtice?"—To this plauſible objection, which has deluded thouſands of ſimple ſouls I anſwer,

(1.) A royal proclamation may be called a good proclamation, though it does not turn the king's ſubjects into lawleſs favourites and the laws of the realm into rules of life, as inſignificant in judgment as rules of grammar. And the ſtatutes of parliament may be good ſtatutes, though they may ſecure the righteous puniſhments of offenders, as well as the gracious privileges of loyal ſubjects.—(2.) If the hand of God is a good hand when it reſiſts the proud, as well as when it gives grace to the humble; and if his arm was a merciful arm when it overthrew [daring] Pharaoh

raoh and his hoſt in the red ſea, as well as when it made [obedient] Iſrael to paſs through the midſt of it; [See Pſ. 136;] why cannot a meſſage from God, which requires practicable obedience, and is enforced by promiſes of gracious rewards in caſe of compliance, and by threatenings of righteous puniſhments in caſe of non-compliance;—why cannot, I ſay, ſuch a meſſage be called a good meſſage, or goſpel?—(3.) Why ſhould not a revelation from God be a good revelation or a goſpel, when it diſplays the ſeverity of his juſtice towards thoſe who reject his gracious offers; as well as the tenderneſs of his compaſſion towards thoſe who accept them; eſpecially if we conſider, that the firſt intention of the denunciations of his vindictive juſtice, is to excite the godly fear, which endears offers of mercy to ſinners, and is in them the beginning of wiſdom?—(4.) If, in the Old Teſtament, the ſweeteſt and moſt joyful meſſages of God's grace are called law; and if, in the New Teſtament, the moſt terrible denunciations of indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh are called goſpel; nothing in the world can be more unſcriptural and abſurd, than the Antinomian Babel erected by ſome zealous Evangeliſts, who teach, that the law of God is nothing but the doctrine of mercileſs juſtice; and that the goſpel of Chriſt is nothing but the doctrine of lawleſs grace?

That the word law in the Old Teſtament, frequently means the ſweeteſt goſpel-promiſes, I prove, Firſt, from theſe ſayings of David, *The law of thy mouth is better to me than thouſands of gold and ſilver*, Pſ. cxix. 72.—*He hath*

remembered his [goſpel] *covenant for ever,—which covenant he hath made with Abraham, and his oath to Iſaac, and confirmed the ſame unto Jacob, for a law,* Pſ. cv. 8, &c. Here the goſpel-covenant made with the three choſen Patriarchs is called a law. Hence it is, that when Iſaiah ſpeaks of the brighteſt diſplay of goſpel-grace at the time that *the mountain of the Lord's houſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed on the top of the mountains,* he ſays, *Out of Sion ſhall go forth the law,* Iſ. ii. 2, 3.—Agreeably to this view of things we read in *Nehemiah, All the people gathered themſelves together as one man, and ſpake to Ezra to bring the Law of Moſes:*—That *the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the Law:*—That *the Levites did read in the Law of God diſtinctly, and gave the ſenſe:*—And that *All the people went their way, &c. to make great mirth, becauſe they had underſtood the words that were declared to them:*—*And there was very great gladneſs;—The joy of the Lord being their ſtrength,* Neh. viii 3. 8. 10, 12, 17. Now, if the Law, which was read and explained to them, contained only the impracticable ſanctions of a mercileſs thundering juſtice; were not all the people out of their ſenſes, when they went their way with great gladneſs after hearing the Law expounded?

The New Teſtament confirms this account of the doctrines of Grace and Juſtice, and of the words law and goſpel. When our Lord [who undoubtedly knew the exact meaning of the word Goſpel] ſent his Diſciples to preach the goſpel to every creature, he charged them to declare, that *He who believeth not ſhall be damned,* as well as that *He who believeth ſhall be*

be saved, Mark xvi. 16. Whence it evidently appears, that our Lord meant by the gospel the severe doctrines of Justice, as well as the comfortable doctrines of Grace.

St Paul gives us exactly the same idea of the gospel. In the epistle to the Romans, where he contends most for the gratuitious election of distinguishing love, he expostulates with those who *despise the riches of God's goodness, and treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds—eternal life to them, who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory;—but indignation and wrath to them, that obey not the truth.* If you ask St. Paul when God will thus display his merciful *goodness*, and tremendous *justice*; he directly answers, *When God shall judge the secrets of men according to my gospel*, that is, according to the promises and threatnings—the doctrines of grace and the doctrines of justice, which compose *the gospel* I preach, Rom. ii. 4—16.

Hence it is, that the apostle calls the Mosaic dispensation sometimes *the law*, and sometimes *the gospel*, while he stiles the Christian dispensation, sometimes *the law of Christ*, and sometimes *the gospel of Christ*.

That St. Paul indifferently calls the Mosaic dispensation *law* and *gospel*, is evident from the following texts: *Every man that is circumcised is a debtor to the whole law*, Gal. v 3. Here the word *law* undoubtedly means the *Mosaic dispensation*. Again, *To us was the gospel preached, as well as to them* [the Israelites who perished in

the wilderneſs for not believing Moſes] Heb. iv. 2. Whence it follows, that *to them*, [the Iſraelites who periſhed] *the goſpel* [i. e. the doctrine of grace and juſtice] *was preached, as well as unto us*, chriſtians, who are ſaved by obedient faith. Once more: That Moſes preached to them, was a doctrine of *grace* and of *juſtice*, is evident from this conſideration. Had the Moſaic goſpel been a doctrine of mere *juſtice*, it could not have been a goſpel like our *gracious* goſpel: and had it been a mere doctrine of *grace*, the apoſtle could never have exited us, not to neglect our *chriſtian* goſpel, and *great* ſalvation, by pointing out to us the fearful deſtruction of the Iſraelites, who neglected their jewiſh goſpel and ſalvation; *leſt any* [chriſtian] *fall after the ſame example of unbelief.* Heb. iv. 11.

With reſpect to the *chriſtian* diſpenſation, the apoſtle calls it ſometimes *the law*: *The doers of the law* [i. e. of the *preſeptive* part of the goſpel] *ſhall be juſtified—when God ſhall judge the ſecrets of men according to my goſpel*, Rom. ii. 13, 16. compared with Matt. xii. 36, 37.—Sometimes he calls it *the law of Chriſt: Bear ye one another's burdens, and ſo fulfil the law of Chriſt*, Gal. vi. 2. Sometimes *the laws of God: I will write my laws* [i. e. my evangelical precepts and promiſes] *in their hearts*, Heb. viii. 10.—x. 16. Sometimes *The law of the Spirit*, Rom. viii. 2. and ſometimes *The goſpel of Chriſt*, Rom. i. 16. Hence it is, that, to be a chriſtian believer, in St. Paul's language, is *to be under the law to Chriſt*, 1 Cor. ix. 21.—As for St. James, he never calls the Chriſtian diſpenſation

penſation *goſpel*; but he ſimply calls it, either *the law*, Jam. iv. 11, 12.—ii. 10. *The law of liberty*, Jam. ii. 12.—or, *The perfect law of liberty*, Jam. i. 25.—St. John uſes the ſame language in his epiſtles, where he never mentions the word *goſpel*, and where ſpeaking of the ſins of chriſtian believers, he ſays, that *ſin is the tranſgreſſion of the law*; whence it follows, that the *ſin of chriſtians*, is the *tranſgreſſion of the law of Chriſt*, or of the holy doctrines of juſtice preached by Jeſus Chriſt. To deny it would be aſſerting we *cannot ſin*: for St. Paul informs us, that the Moſaic law is *done away*, 2 Cor. iii. 11. Now, if no chriſtian is under the law of Moſes, and if Chriſt never adopted the law of our nature, and never grafted the moral part of the Moſaic law into the chriſtian diſpenſation; or, in other terms, if Chriſt's goſpel is a lawleſs inſtitution, it neceſſarily follows that no chriſtian can ſin: for *Sin is not imputed* or charged [that is, There is no ſin] *where there is no law*, Rom. v. 13. Hence it is, that antinomian doctrines of grace repreſent fallen, adulterous, bloody believers, as *ſpotleſs*, or ſinleſs before God, in all their ſins. Such is the neceſſary conſequence of a lawleſs goſpel armed with pointleſs rules of life!" Such the dreadful tendency of *doctrines of grace* torn away from the *doctrines of juſtice!*

SECT. II.

Remarks on the two Gospel-axioms, or capital truths, upon which the doctrines of Grace and Justice are founded. Augustine himself once granted both those truths. Rigid Arminians indirectly deny the one, and rigid Calvinists the other. How the partial defenders of the doctrines of Justice and Grace try to save appearances, with respect to the part of the truth, which they indirectly oppose.

SO noble and solid a superstructure as the gospel [i. e. the scripture-doctrines of *grace* and *justice*] undoubtedly stands upon a noble and sure foundation. Accordingly we find, that the primitive gospel rests on two principles, the one *theological* and the other *moral*. These two principles, or, if you please, these two pillers of gospel-truth, may for distinction's sake, be called *Gospel-axioms:* at least I beg leave to call them so. Nor will the candid reader deny my request, if he considers the following definitions.

I. *An axiom* is a self-evident truth, which at once recommends itself to the understanding, or to the conscience of every unprejudiced man. Thus, *two and two make four*, is an *axiom* in every counting-house. And that *The absolute necessity of all human actions is incompatible with a moral law and a day of judgment*, is an axiom in every unprejudiced mind.

II. The *two gospel-axioms* are the two principles, or capital self-evident truths, on which the

the primitive *gospel*, [that is, the scripture-doctrine of *grace* and *justice*] is founded.

III. The *first gospel-axiom* bears up the holy *doctrines of grace*, and [when it is cordially received] is equally destructive of proud pharisaism and the unholy doctrines of lawless grace. This axiom is the following self-evident truth, which recommends itself to the mind and conscience of every candid bible-christian. "*Our first talent* or *degree of salvation is merely of God's free-grace in Christ, without any work or endeavour of our own: and our eternal salvation is originally, capitally* *, *and finally* † *of God's free-grace in Christ; through our not neglecting that first talent or degree of salvation.—I say, through our not neglecting*, &c. to secure the connexion of the two gospel-axioms, and to leave scripture-room for the doctrines of remunerative *justice*.

* A solifidian would say *entirely*, and by this means he would leave no room for the *second* gospel-axiom, for the rewardableness of the works of faith, and for the doctrines of remunerative justice. But by saying *capitally*, we avoid this three-fold mistake, we secure the honour of *holy* Free-grace, and shut the door against its counterfeit.

† By adding *finally*, we show that the *top-stone*, as well as the *foundation-stone* of our *eternal* salvation, is to be brought with *shouting Grace! Grace unto it*; because, if Christ had honoured his obedient saints with a sight of his heavenly glory for half an hour, and then suffered them to fall gently asleep in the bosom of oblivion, or to slide into a state of personal non-existence, he would have demonstrated his remunerative justice, and amply rewarded their best services. Hence it appears that God's giving *eternal* rewards of glory for a few temporary services, done by his own grace, is such an instance of *free-grace*, as nothing but *eternal* shouts of *Grace! Grace!* can sufficiently acknowledge. We desire our mistaken brethren to consider this remark; otherwise they will wrong the Truth and us, by

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IV. The *second gospel-axiom* bears up the *doctrines of justice*, and extirpates the doctrine of *Free-wrath*. It is the following proposition, which, I believe, no candid Bible-christian will deny. *Our eternal damnation as originally § and principally of our own personal Free-will, through an obstinate, and final neglect of the first talent or degree of salvation.*

These two gospel-axioms may be thus expressed: (1) *Our salvation is of God:* or, *There is free-grace in God*, which, through Christ, freely places all men in a state of temporary redemption, justification, or salvation according to various gospel-dispensations, and crowns those who are faithful unto death with an eternal redemption, justification, or salvation.

continuing to say, that *our* doctrines of grace allow indeed Free-grace to lay the *foundation*, but that they reserve to the works of our rectified Free-will the honour of bringing the top-stone of our *eternal* salvation with saying *Works! Works! unto it*; a pharisaic doctrine this, which we abhor; loudly asserting that, although our free, unnecessitated obedience of faith intervenes, yet God in Christ is the *Omega* as well as the *Alpha*—the *end* as well as the *beginning* of our *eternal* salvation.

§ I add the word *originally*, to cut off the *self-excusing* opinion of those men, who charge their *eternal* damnation upon an absolute decree of reprobation, or upon Adam's first transgression.—As for the word *principally*, it secures the part in the damnation of the *wicked*, which the scriptures ascribe to the *righteous* God; it being certain, (1) That God judicially hardens his slothful and unprofitable servants, by taking from them, at the end of their day of grace, the talent of softening grace, which they have obstinately buried: and (2) That he judicially reprobates, or damns them, by pronouncing this awful sentence, *Depart, ye cursed, &c.* A flame of vindictive justice belongs to the gospel of Christ, Heb. xii. 29. but not a single spark of Free-wrath.

—(2) *Our*

—(2) *Our damnation is of ourſelves:* or, *There is free-will in man*, by which he may, through the grace freely imparted to him in the day of *temporary* ſalvation, work out his own *eternal* ſalvation; or, he may, [through the natural power which angels had to ſin in heaven, and our firſt parents in paradiſe] chuſe to ſin away the day of temporary ſalvation. And by thus working out his damnation he may provoke *Juſt-wrath* [which is the ſame as *deſpiſed Free-grace*] to puniſh him with eternal deſtruction.

Theſe two truths, or axioms might be made ſtill plainer, thus: (1) Our gracious and juſt God, in a day of ſalvation begun, ſets life or death before us:—(2) As free-willing, aſſiſted creatures, we may, during that day, chuſe which we pleaſe: We may ſtretch out our hand to the water, or to the fire.—Or thus: (1) There is holy, righteous, and partial, free-grace in God: (2) There is free-will in redeemed, aſſiſted man, whereby he is capable of obeying or diſobeying God's holy, righteous, and partial Free-grace.—For conveniency's ſake theſe axioms may be ſhortened thus: (1.) *The doctrine of holy free-grace* and partial mercy in God is true, (2.) The doctrine of rectified, aſſiſted Free-will in man, and of impartial juſtice in God, is true alſo.

This lovely pair of evangelical propoſitions, appears to me ſo eſſential to the fulneſs and harmony of the goſpel, that I doubt not but if *Pelagius* and *Auguſtine* themſelves were alive, neither of them would dare *directly* to riſe againſt it. Time, or envy, has deſtroyed the works of *Pelagius*, the great aſſerter of *free-will* and the doctrines of *juſtice*; we cannot therefore

fore support the doctrines of free-grace by *his* conceſſions: but we have the writings of *Auguſtine*, the great defender of God's diſtinguiſhing love, and the doctrine of free-grace: and yet, partial as he was to *theſe* doctrines, in an happy moment, he boldly ſtood up for free-will, and the doctrines of juſtice. This appears from the judicious and candid queſtions, which he propoſes in one of his epiſtles: [Si non eſt *gratia* Dei, quomodo ſalvat mundum? Si non eſt *liberum arbitrium*, quomodo judicat mundum?] "*If there be not free-grace in God, how does he*" [graciouſly] "*ſave the world? If there be not free-will*" [in men,] "*how does He*" [righteouſly] "*judge the world.*"

To conclude: Whoever holds forth theſe two Bible-axioms, [*There is free-grace in God, whence man's ſalvation graciouſly flows in various degrees*;] and, [*There is free-will in every man, whence the damnation of all that periſh, juſtly proceeds*:]—Whoever, I ſay, conſiſtently holds forth theſe two ſelf-evident propoſitions, is, in my humble judgment, a goſpel-miniſter who *rightly divides the word of truth*. He is a friend to both the doctrines of partial grace and impartial juſtice, of mercy and obedience, of faith and good works: in ſhort, he preaches the primitive Goſpel, re-unites the two oppoſite Goſpels of the day, and equally obviates the errors of *Honeſtus* and *Zelotes*, who ſtand up for the modern Goſpels.

If you aſk what thoſe errors are, I anſwer, *Honeſtus* the Pelagian or rigid Arminian, ſeldom preaches *Free-grace*, and never dwells on the notorious partiality and abſolute ſovereignty,

fovereignty, with which God at firſt diſtributes the various talents of his grace: and, when he preaches *Free-will*, he ſeldom preaches free-will *initially rectified* and *continually aſſiſted by free-grace:* rarely, if ever, deeply humbling his hearers by diſplaying the *total* helpleſſneſs of *un-rectified* and *un-aſſiſted* Free-will: and thus he veils the delightful doctrine of God's *Free-grace*, clouds the *evangelical* doctrine of man's Free-will, and inadvertently opens the door to ſelf-conceited phariſaiſm. On the other hand, *Zelotes*, the ſolifidian, or rigid Calviniſt, ſeldom or never preaches *rectified, aſſiſted Free-will*; he harps only on the doctrine of *abſolute neceſſity:* and when he preaches *Free-grace*, he too often preaches: (1.) A *cruel* free-grace, which turning itſelf into *free-wrath*, with reſpect to a majority of mankind, abſolutely paſſes them by, and conſigns them over to everlaſting, infallible damnation, by means of neceſſary fore-ordained ſin: and (2) An unſcriptural free-grace, which turning itſelf into *lawleſs fondneſs*, with reſpect to a number of favourite ſouls, *abſolutely* enſures to them eternal redemption, complete juſtification, and finiſhed ſalvation, be they ever ſo unfaithful.

By this means *Zelotes* ſpoils the doctrine of free-grace, undeſignedly injures the doctrine of holineſs, and utterly deſtroys the doctrine of juſtice. For when he denies that the greateſt part of mankind have any intereſt in God's redeeming love; when he intimates, that the doctrines of an abſolute neceſſitating election to eternal life, and of an abſolute neceſſitating rejection from eternal life, are true; and that God's reprobates are not leſs neceſſitated to ſin

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to the end and be damned, than God's elect are to obey to the end and be saved; does he not pour contempt upon the throne of divine *justice?* Does he not make the supreme Judge, who fills that throne, appear as unwise when he distributes heavenly rewards, as cruel, when he inflicts infernal punishments?

Honestus and *Zelotes* will probably think, that I misrepresent them. *Honestus* will say, that he cordially believes God is full of *free-grace* for all men, and that he only thinks it would be *unjust* in God to be *partial* in the distribution of his *free-grace.* But when *Honestus* reasons thus, does he not confound grace and justice? Does he not sap the foundation of the throne of *grace*, under pretence of establishing the throne of *justice?* If God cannot do what he pleases with his *grace*, and if *justice* always binds him in the distribution of his favours, does not his grace deserve the name of *impartial justice*, far better than the appellation of *free-grace?*

As *Honestus* tries to save appearances with regard to the doctrines of *grace*, so does *Zelotes*, with regard to the doctrines of *justice.* "The gospel I preach, says he, is highly consistent with the doctrines of *justice*, I indeed intimate, that the elect are *necessitated* to believe and be eternally saved; and the reprobates, to sin on and be lost: but both this salvation of the elect, and damnation of the reprobates, perfectly agree with divine equity. For Christ, by his obedience unto death, *merited* the eternal salvation of all that shall be saved: and *Adam*, by his first act of disobedience, *deserved* the absolute reprobation of all that shall be damned. Our doctrines of grace are therefore highly consistent with

with the doctrines of *juſtice.*" This argument appears unanſwerable to *Zelotes*; but I confeſs it does not ſatisfy me. For if the doctrine of *abſolute neceſſity* is thus foiſted into the goſpel, and if Chriſt makes his elect people abſolutely, and unavoidably willing to obey and go to heaven; whilſt *Adam* makes his reprobate people abſolutely and unavoidably willing to ſin on and go to hell; I ſhould be glad to know, how the elect can be *wiſely judged* according to, and rewarded for, *their* faith and good works; and how the reprobates can be *juſtly ſentenced* according to, and puniſhed for, *their* unbelief and bad works. I repeat it, the doctrine of an *abſolute predeſtination* to life or death eternal, which is one and the ſame with the doctrine of an *abſolute neceſſity* to believe, or diſbelieve, to obey or diſobey to the laſt,—ſuch a doctrine, I ſay, is totally ſubverſive of the doctrines of *juſtice.* For reaſon depoſes, that it is *abſurd* to give to *neceſſary agents* a law, or rule of life, armed with promiſes of rewards, and threatnings of puniſhments. And conſcience declares, that it is *unjuſt* and *cruel* to inflict fearful, eternal puniſhments upon beings, that have only moved or acted by *abſolute neceſſity*; whether ſuch beings are running ſtreams, aſpiring flames, falling ſtones, turning wheels, mad men, bound-thinkers, bound-willers, or bound agents; ſuppoſing ſuch bound-thinkers, bound-willers, and bound-agents did think, will, and act, as *unavoidably* as the wind raiſes a ſtorm, and as *neceſſarily* as a fired cannon pours forth flames and deſtruction. Abſolute neceſſity and a righteous judgment are abſo-

lutely incompatible. We muſt renounce the miſtakes of *rigid* Calviniſts, or give up the doctrines of *juſtice*.

SECT. III.

By whom chiefly the goſpel-axioms were ſyſtematically parted; and under what pretences prejudiced, good men tore aſunder the doctrines of grace and juſtice; and rent the one primitive, catholic goſpel, into the two partial goſpels of the day.

FROM the preceding ſection it appears, that, to preach the goſpel in its primitive purity, is ſo to hold forth and balance the two goſpel-axioms, as to allow both *the doctrines of grace*, and *the doctrines of juſtice*, the place which is aſſigned them in the word of God: it is ſo to preach *holy Free-grace*, and *rectified, aſſiſted Free-will*, as equally to grind Phariſaiſm and Antinomianiſm [the *graceleſs* and the *lawleſs* goſpel] between theſe two evangelical mill-ſtones. And thus the goſpel was, in general, preached by good men for above three hundred years after Chriſt's aſcenſion. If ever the tempter put ſucceſsfully in practice his two capital maxims, *Confound and deſtroy*,—*Divide and conquer*, it was in the fourth century, when he helped *Pelagius* and *Auguſtin*, two warm diſputants, openly to *confound* what ſhould have been properly diſtinguiſhed, and ſyſtematically to *divide*, what ſhould have been religiouſly joined; by which means they broke the

the balance of the doctrines of *grace* and *juſtice*. Nor did they do it out of malice: but through an immoderate regard for *one part* of the goſpel: an injudicious regard this, which was naturally productive of a proportionable diſregard for *the other part* of God's word.

Pelagius (we are told by *Auguſtin*) preached *free-will*; but, confounding *natural* free-will with Free-grace *rectified and aſſiſted by grace*, he made too much of *natural free-will*, and too little of God's Free-grace. The *left* leg of his goſpel-ſyſtem grew gigantic, whilſt the *right* leg ſhrunk almoſt to nothing. And, commencing a *rigid Free-willer*, he inſiſted upon the ſufficiency of our natural powers, and dwelt on the *ſecond* goſpel-axiom, and *the doctrines of juſtice* in ſo partial a manner, that he almoſt eclipſed the *firſt* goſpel-axiom, and *the doctrines of grace*.

Auguſtin, his co-temporary, under pretence of mending the matter, was guilty of an error exactly contrary. He ſo puffed up the *right* leg of his goſpel-ſyſtem, as to make it monſtrous; while the *left* grew as ſlender and inſignificant as a rotten ſtick. To bring this unhappy change about, in his controverſial heats he confounded lawful, righteous free-grace with lawleſs, unſcriptural, over-bearing free-grace; and to make room for this latter, *imaginary* ſort of grace, he ſometimes turned *free-will* out of its place, to give that place to *neceſſity*. Thus he commenced a *rigid bound-willer*. The irreſiſtible free-grace, which he preached, bound the elect by the chains of an unconditional election to life, abſolutely *neceſſitating* them to repent, believe, and be eternally ſaved: whilſt the

irreſiſtible free wrath, which ſecretly advanced behind that over-bearing grace, bound the non-elect in chains of abſolute reprobation, and *neceſſitated* them to ſin on, and be unavoidably damned. By this means, new, unholy doctrines of *grace* and *wrath* juſtled the holy, ancient doctrines of *grace* and *juſtice* out of their place. The two goſpel-axioms did no longer agree: but the firſt axiom, becoming like Leviathan, ſwallowed up the ſecond. For the moment irreſiſtible, lawleſs free-grace, and deſpotic, cruel free-wrath mount the throne, what room is there for *holy, righteous* free-grace? What room for free-will? What room for the doctrines of *juſtice?* What room for the primitive goſpel? Abſolutely none; unleſs it be a *narrow* room indeed, artfully contrived under an heap of Auguſtinian contradictions, and Calvinian inconſiſtences.

From this ſhort account of *Pelagianiſm* and *Auguſtiniſm*, it is evident, that heated *Pelagius* (if the account given us be true) gave a deſperate thruſt to the *right* ſide of primitive chriſtianity; and that heated *Auguſtin*, in his hurry to defend her, aimed a well-meant blow at *Pelagius*, but by over-doing it, and miſſing his mark, wounded the *left* ſide of the heavenly woman, who from that time has lain bleeding between theſe two raſh antagoniſts. *The beginning of ſtrife is as when one letteth out water*, ſays the Wiſe Man. Theſe *waters of ſtrife*, which Pelagius and Auguſtin let in upon the church, by breaking the flood-gates of goſpel-truth, ſoon overflowed the chriſtian world, and at times, like the waters of the overflowing Nile, have almoſt been turned into blood. When

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ſtreams of ſelf-juſtifying, rigid, Pelagian, free-will, have met with ſtreams of ſelf-electing, lawleſs, Auguſtinian free-grace; the ſtrife has been loud and terrible. They have foamed out their own ſhame, and frighted thouſands of travellers to Sion out of the noiſy ways of a *corrupted* goſpel, into the more quiet paths of infidelity.

For above a thouſand years, theſe *waters of ſtrife* have ſpread devaſtation through the *Chriſtian* world; I had almoſt ſaid alſo through the *Mahometan* world: for *Mahomet*, who collected the filth of corrupt Chriſtianity, derived theſe errors into his ſyſtem of religion: *Omar* and *Hali*, at leaſt, two of his relations and ſucceſſors, became the leaders of two ſects, which divide the Mahometan world. *Omar*, whom the Turks follow, ſtood up for bound-will, neceſſity, and a ſpecies of abſolute Auguſtinian predeſtination. And *Hali*, whom the Perſians revere, embraced rigid free-will and Pelagian free-agency. But the worſt is, that theſe muddy waters have flowed, through the dirty channel of the Romiſh church, into all the proteſtant-churches, and have at times deluged them; turning, wherever they came, brotherly love into fierce contention. For breaking the evangelical balance of the goſpel-axioms is as naturally productive of polemical debates in the church, as breaking the parliamentary balance between the king and the people, is of contention and civil wars in the ſtate. How this plague firſt infected proteſtantiſm, will be ſeen in the next ſection.

SECT. IV.

Luther and Calvin did not reſtore the balance of the goſpel-axioms. That honour was reſerved for Cranmer, the Engliſh reformer, who modelled the Church of England very nearly according to the primitive goſpel.—How ſoon the Auguſtinian doctrines of lawleſs grace preponderated.—How the Pelagian doctrine of unaſſiſted free-will now preponderates.

WHEN the firſt reformers ſhook off the yoke of papiſtical trumperies, they fought gallantly for many glorious truths. But it is to be wiſhed, that, whilſt they warmly contended for the ſimple, ſcriptural dreſs of the primitive goſpel, they had not forgotten to fight for ſome of its very vitals, I mean the doctrines of *holy free-grace*, and *rectified, aſſiſted free-will*. They did much good in many reſpects; ſo much indeed, that no grateful proteſtant can find fault with them without reluctance. But, after all, they did not reſtore the balance of the doctrines of *grace* and *juſtice*. *Luther*, the German reformer, being a monk of the order of *Auguſtin*, entered upon the reformation full of prejudices in favour of *Auguſtin's* ſolifidian miſtakes. And he was ſo buſy in oppoſing the Pope of Rome, his indulgences, Latin maſſes, and other monaſtic fooleries, that he did not find time to oppoſe the Auguſtinian fooleries of fataliſm, Manichean neceſſity, lawleſs grace, and free-wrath. On the

the contrary, in one of his heats, he broke the left ſcale of the goſpel-balances, denied there was any ſuch thing as *free-will*, and by that means gave a moſt deſtructive blow to the doctrines of *juſtice*: a raſh deed, for which *Eraſmus*, the Dutch Reformer, openly reproved him, but with too much of the Pelagian ſpirit.

Calvin, the French Reformer [who, after he had left his native country, taught Divinity in the Academy of Geneva] far from getting light and learning moderation, by the controverſy of *Luther* and *Eraſmus*, ruſhed with all the impetuoſity of his ardent ſpirit into the error of heated *Auguſtin*; and ſo zealouſly maintained it, that from that time it has been called *Calviniſm*.

If *Calvin* did not grow wiſer by the diſpute of *Luther* and *Eraſmus*; *Melanchon* another German Reformer did; and our great Engliſh Reformer *Cranmer*, who in wiſdom, candor and moderation, far exceeded the generality of the Reformers on the continent, cloſely imitated his excellent example. Nay, to the honour of this favoured Iſland, and of *perfect* proteſtantiſm, in an happy moment he found the exact balance of the goſpel-axioms. Read, admire, and obey his anti-Auguſtinian, anti-Pelagian, and Apoſtolic Proclamation. "*All men* be alſo to be moniſhed, and *chiefly Preachers*, that, in this *high matter*, they, looking on both ſides" [i. e. *looking both to the doctrines of grace and the doctrines of juſtice*] "ſo attemper and moderate themſelves, that neither they ſo preach the *grace of God*" [*with heated Auguſtin*] that they take away thereby *free-will*; nor

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on the other ſide, ſo extol *free-will*" [*with heated Pelagius*] "that injury be done to the *grace of God.*" *Erud. of a Chriſtian Man. Sect. on Free-will*, which was added by Cranmer. Here you ſee the balance of the doctrines of grace and juſtice, which Auguſtin and Pelagius had broken, and which Luther and Calvin had ground to duſt in *ſome* of their overdoing moments,—you ſee, I ſay, that important balance perfectly reſtored by the Engliſh Reformer. With this ſhort valuable quotation, as with a ſhield of impenetrable braſs, *all men* and *chiefly Preachers*, may quench all the fiery darts caſt at the primitive goſpel by the Preachers of the partial goſpels of the day; I mean the abetters of the *Auguſtinian*, or of the *Pelagian* error.

Mankind is prone to run into extremes. The world is full of men, who always overdo or underdo. Few people ever find the line of moderation, the golden mean; and of thoſe who do, few ſtay long upon it. One blaſt or another of vain doctrine, ſoon drives them Eaſt or Weſt from the Meridian of pure truth. How happy would it have been for the Church of England, if her firſt members had ſteadily followed the light, which our great Reformer carried before them. But alas, not a few of them had more zeal than moderation. *Cranmer* could not make all his fellow-reformers to ſee with his eyes. In the time of their popiſh ſuperſtition many of them had deeply imbibed the errors of St. Auguſtin, whom the Church of Rome reveres as the greateſt of the Fathers, and the holieſt of the ancient Saints: theſe good men finding, that his doctrine was countenanced

tenanced by Luther, Calvin, Peter Martyr, Bucer, and others, whom they looked upon as oracles, ſoon relapſed into the Auguſtinian doctrines of lawleſs grace, from which ſome of them had never been quite diſentangled. Even during Cranmer's confinement, [but much more after his martyrdom] they began to renounce the doctrines of *juſtice*, which were only indirectly ſecured in the ſeventeenth article of our Church; warmly contending for the doctrines of neceſſitating grace, which are always deſtructive of the doctrines of *Juſtice*. Thus, while ſome of them erected the canopy of a lawleſs, ſolifidian free-grace over ſome men elected according to Calvin's notions of an abſolute election to eternal life; others caſt the ſable net of *free-wrath* over the reſt of mankind; imagining that from all eternity moſt men were abſolutely predeſtinated to eternal death, according to the Calvinian doctrine of abſolute unconditional reprobation. Thus the balance of the goſpel-axioms which Cranmer [conſidering the times] had maintained to admiration, was again broken. Rigid Calviniſm got the aſcendency; the doctrines of *juſtice* were publicly decried as popery and hereſy, almoſt all England over. All the reprobates were exculpated: by the doctrine of neceſſity, their unavoidable continuance in ſin, and their damnation, were openly charged upon God and Adam. Decrees of abſolute predeſtination to neceſſary holineſs and eternal ſalvation, and ſtatutes of abſolute appointment to neceſſary ſin and eternal damnation, began currently to paſs for goſpel. And the *doctrines of juſtice* were ſwept away, as if they had been

been poiſonous *cobwebs ſpun by* popiſh *ſpiders*. Hence it is, that the Rev. Mr. Toplady, deſcribing the triumphs of rigid Calviniſm in the days of Queen Elizabeth, ſays in his letter to Dr. Nowell, p. 45, that "Thoſe who held this opinion, of God's not being any cauſe of ſin and damnation, were at that time mightily cried out againſt, by the main body of our reformed church, as *Fautors of falſe religion*,"—and, "That to be called a *free will-man*, was looked upon as a *ſhameful reproach*, and *opprobrious infamy*; yea, and that a perſon ſo termed was deemed *heretical*."—A proof this, that Dr. *Peter Heylin* ſpeaks the truth when he ſays, "It was ſafer for any man in thoſe times, to have been looked upon as an *heathen* or *publican*, than an *anti-calviniſt*."

Should the judicious reader aſk how it happened, that the doctrines of unſcriptural grace, free-wrath, and neceſſity, were ſo ſoon ſubſtituted for the doctrines of genuine Free-grace and rectified, aſſiſted Free-will, which Cranmer had ſo evangelically maintained: I anſwer, that altho' *Thomas Aquinas* and *Scotus*, the leading divines of the church of Rome, through their great veneration for *Auguſtin*, leaned too much towards the lawleſs, wrathful doctrines of grace; yet *Luther*, *Calvin* and *Zuinglius* leaned ſtill more towards that extreme. This was ſoon obſerved by ſome of the popiſh Doctors: and as they knew not how to make a proper ſtand againſt the genuine doctrines of the reformation, they were gladto find a good opportunity of oppoſing the reformers, by oppoſing the Auguſtinian miſtakes which Luther and Calvin carried to the height. Accordingly leaving the extreme of Auguſtin, to which

which they had chiefly leaned before, many of the popiſh divines began to lean towards the extreme of Pelagius, and commenced rigid and partial defenders of the doctrines of *juſtice*, which the German, French, and Swiſs reformers had indirectly deſtroyed, by overflowing the doctrine of *free-will*, which is inſeparably connected with the doctrine of a day of *juſt* judgment. Hence it is, that, at the council of *Trent*, which the Pope had called to ſtop the progreſs of the reformation, the papiſts took openly the part of the *ſecond* goſpel-axiom; and in the ſpirit of contradiction began warmly to oppoſe Auguſtin's miſtakes, which the firſt Jeſuits had ardently embraced; *Bellarmin* himſelf not excepted. Party ſpirit ſoon blew up the partial zeal of the contending divines. Proteſtant bigotry ran againſt Popiſh bigotry; and the effect of the ſhock was a driving of each other ſtill farther from the line of ſcripture-moderation. Thus many Papiſts, eſpecially thoſe who wrote againſt the Calvinian proteſtants, became the partial ſupporters of the doctrines of *juſtice*, while their opponents ſhewed themſelves the partial vindicators of the doctrines of *grace*. Hence it is, that, in the popiſh countries, thoſe who ſtood up for faith and diſtinguiſhing *free-grace*, began to be called Hereticks, Lutherans and Solifidians; whilſt, in the proteſtant countries, thoſe who had the courage to maintain the doctrines of *juſtice*, good works, and unneceſſitated obedience, were branded as Papiſt, Merit-mongers and Heretics.

Things continued in this unhappy ſtate, till oppreſſed truth made new efforts to ſhake off the yokes put upon her. For the ſcales, which hold the weights of the ſanctuary, [the two goſpel-

axioms]

axioms] hover and ſhift, till they have attained their equilibrium; juſt as the diſturbed needle of a compaſs quivers and moves, till it has recovered its proper ſituation, and points again due north. This new ſhifting happened in the laſt century, when *Arminius*, a proteſtant divine, endeavoured to reſcue the doctrines of *juſtice*, which were openly trampled under foot by moſt proteſtants; and when *Janſenius* a popiſh biſhop, attempted to exhalt the doctrines of *diſtinguiſhing grace*, which moſt divines of the church of Rome had of late left to the proteſtants. Thus *Janſenius*, overdoing after *Auguſtin*, brought the doctrines of unſcriptural grace and free-wrath with a full tide into the church of Rome; while *Arminius*, (or, at leaſt, ſome of his followers) drove them with all his might out of the proteſtant churches.

Many countries were in a general ferment on this occaſion. A great number of proteſtant divines aſſembled at *Dort* in Holland, confirmed *Calvin's* indirect oppoſition to the doctrines of *juſtice*, and condemned *Arminius* after his death; for, during his life, none cared to attack him: ſuch was the reputation he had, even through Holland, both for learning and exemplary piety! On the other hand, the Pope, with his conclave, imitating the partiality of the ſynod of Dort, *injudiciouſly* condemned *Janſenius* and his Calviniſm, and by this means did an injury to the doctrines of *grace*, which *Janſenius* warmly contended for. But truth ſhall ſtand, be it ever ſo much oppoſed by either partial proteſtants or partial papiſts. Therefore, notwithſtanding the deciſions of the popiſh conclave, *Janſeniſm* and the doctrines of *Grace* continued to leaven the church of Rome: Whilſt, notwithſtanding the deciſions

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of the proteſtant ſynod, *Arminianiſm* and the doctrines of *Juſtice*, continued to ſpread through the proteſtant churches.

Archbiſhop *Laud*, in the days of King *James* and *Charles* the firſt, cauſed in the goſpel-ſcales the turn, which then began to take place in our church in favour of the doctrines of *juſtice*. He was the chief inſtrument, which, like Moſes's rod, began to part the boiſterous ſea of *rigid* Calviniſm. He received his light from *Arminius*: but it was corrupted by a mixture of *Pelagian* darkneſs. He aimed rather at putting down abſolute *reprobation* and lawleſs grace, than at clearing up the ſcripture doctrine of a partial *Election*, doing juſtice to the doctrines of *grace*, and reconciling the contending parties, by reconciling the two goſpel axioms. Hence it is that paſſing beyond the ſcripture-meridian, he led moſt of the Engliſh clergy from one extreme to the other. For now it is to be feared, that the generality of them are gone as far Weſt, as they were before Eaſt, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The *firſt* Goſpel-axiom formerly preponderated; and now the *ſecond* goes ſwiftly down. *Free-will* is, *in general* cried up in oppoſition to *Free-grace*, as exceſſively and *Pelagianiſtically* [if I may uſe the expreſſion] as in the beginning of the laſt century, Free-grace was unreaſonably and *Calviniſtically* ſet up in oppoſition to *Free-will*. I ſay *in general*, becauſe, although moſt of our pulpits are filled with preachers, who *Pelagianize* as well as *Honeſtus*, there are ſtill a few divines, who like *Zelotes*, ſtrongly run into the *Calvinian* extreme.

But however, ſooner or later, judicious, moderate men will convince the chriſtian world,

that the gospel equally comprizes the doctrines of *grace*, and of *justice*; and that it consists of *promises* to be *believed*, and *precepts* to be *observed*; *gracious* promises and *holy* precepts, which are armed with the sanction of proper rewards or punishments, and are as incompatible with *Pelagian* self sufficiency, as with the *Calvinian* doctrines of lawless grace and free-wrath. And as soon as this is clearly and practically understood by christians, primitive unity and harmony will be restored to the partial gospels of the day.

SECT. V.

What the two modern gospels are.—Their dreadful consequences.—Arminius *tried to find the way of truth between these two gospels, but perhaps missed it a little.—The rectifying of his mistakes lately attempted.*

BY the two modern gospels, I mean Pelagianism or rigid Arminianism, and the doctrine of absolute necessity of rigid Calvinism. The former is a gospel, which so exalts the doctrines of *justice*, as to obscure the doctrines of *partial grace* :—A gospel, which so holds forth the *second* gospel axiom, as to hide the glory of the first either in whole or in part. *Rigid Calvinism*, on the other hand, is a gospel, which so extols the doctrines of distinguishing grace, as to eclipse the doctrines of justice;—a gospel which so holds forth the *first* gospel-axiom, as to hide the glory of the *second* in whole or in part. The fault of these two systems of doctrine consists in parting, or in not properly balancing the doctrines of grace and of justice.

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The confusion, which this error has occasioned in the churches of Christ for above a thousand years, should [one would think] have opened the eyes of all overdoing and underdoing divines, and made them look out for a safe passage between the *Pelagian* and the *Calvinian* rocks. That any *good* men should continue unconcernedly to run the bark of their orthodoxy against those fatal rocks of error is really astonishing; especially if we consider, that nobody can look into ecclesiastical history without seeing the marks of the numerous wrecks of truth and love, which they have caused. Wide, however, as the empire of prejudice is, Candor is not yet turned out of the world. In all the churches of Christ there are men, who will yet hear scripture and reason. But many of them, through a variety of avocations, through an indolence of disposition, or through despair of finding the exact truth, tamely submit to what appears to them a remediless evil. They are sorry, that christians should be so divided: but not seeing any prospect of ending our deplorable divisions, they quietly walk in *Pelagian* or *Calvinian* ways, without seeking the unbeaten path of truth, which exactly lies between those two frequented roads. One of the reasons why they take up so readily with the *Pelagian* or *Calvinian* system, is their not considering the dreadful evils which flow from each, some of which I shall set before the reader. I have already observed, that the error of *Pelagius* [if St. Augustin and his votaries do not wrong him] consists in exalting *free-will* and *human powers* so as to leave little or no room for the exertion of *free-grace* and divine *power:* and that on the other hand, the error of *Augustin* and *Calvin* consists in so exalting irresistible *free-grace openly*, and

irresistible *free-wrath secretly*, that there is no reasonable room left for the exertion of faithful or unfaithful *free-will*, or indeed for any *free-will* at all. Now in the very nature of things, these two opposite extremes lead to the most dangerous errors. I begin with enumerating those, which belong to the *Pelagian* extreme,

Reason and experience shew, that, when the *Pelagian* error rises to its height, it leads men into *Arianism*, *Socinianism*, *Deism*, and, sometimes into *avowed Fatalism* or *Popish Pharisaism*.

(1) By *Arianism* I mean the doctrine of *Arius*, a Divine of Alexandria, who lived about the time of Pelagius, and not only insinuated, that man was not so fallen as to need an omnipotent Redeemer, whose name is GOD *with us*; but openly taught, that Christ was *only* an exalted, super-angelical *Creature*.

(2) *Socinianism* is the error of *Socinus*, a learned, moral man, who lived since the reformation, and had such high notions of man's free-will and powers, that he thought man could save himself even without the help of a *Super-Angelical* Redeemer. And accordingly he asserted, that Christ was a *Mere Man*, like Moses and Elias, and that his blood had no more power to atone for sin, than that of Abel or St Paul.

(3) *Deism* is the error of those, who carry matters still higher, and think that man is so perfectly able by the exertions of his own mere free-will and natural powers, to recommend himself to the mercy of the Supreme Being, that he needs *no Redeemer at all*. Hence it is, that altho' the Deists still believe in *God* [and on that account, assume the name of *Theists* or *Deists*] they make no more of *Christ* and the bible, than of the Pope and his mass-book, and look upon the doctrines

doctrines of the *incarnation* and the *Trinity* as wild and idolatrous conceits.

(4) *Avowed Fataliſm* is the error of thoſe, who believe, that *whatever is, is right*; and that all things happen [and, of conſequence, that all ſins are committed] of *Fatal abſolute neceſſity*. This is an error into which *immoral* deiſts are very apt to run: for, when they feel guilt upon their conſciences, as they have no idea of a mediator to take it away, they wiſh that their bad actions had been *neceſſary*, that is, abſolutely brought on by the ſtars, or cauſed by God's decrees, which would fully exculpate them. And as this doctrine eaſes their guilty conſciences, they firſt deſire that it might be true, and by little and little, perſuade themſelves that it is ſo, and publicly maintain their error. Hence it is that immoral deiſts, ſuch as Voltaire and many of his followers, are avowed fataliſts.

(5) *Jewiſh Phariſaiſm* is the error of thoſe, who are ſuch ſtrangers to the doctrines of grace, as to think they have no need of the rich mercy which God extends to poor publicans. Fancying themſelves righteous they thank God for their ſuppoſed goodneſs, when they ſhould ſmite upon their breaſts on account of their real depravity. *Popiſh Phariſaiſm* is an error ſtill more capital. Thoſe who are deep in it not only take little notice of the doctrines of grace, but carry their ideas of the doctrines of juſtice to ſuch unſcriptural and abſurd lengths as to imagine, that their penances can make a proper atonement for their ſins: that God is, ſtrictly ſpeaking, their debtor on account of their good works, and that they cannot only merit the reward of eternal life for themſelves by their good deeds, but deſerve it alſo for others by their *works of ſupererogation*,

and through their *ſuperabundant obedience and goodneſs*; a conceit ſo deteſtable, that, one would think, it needs only be mentioned to be fully exploded, and perfectly abhorred.

Dreadful as are theſe conſequences of *Pelagianiſm* carried to its height, the conſequences of *Auguſtiniſm*, or *Calviniſm*, carried alſo to its height, are not at all better. For, the demolition of *free-will*, and the ſetting up of *irreſiſtible, electing Free-grace*, and *abſolute*, reprobating free-wrath lead to *Antinomianiſm*, *Manicheiſm*, *diſguiſed Fatalyſm*, *widely reprobating bigotry*, *and ſelf-electing preſumption* or *ſelf reprobating deſpair*. The four firſt of theſe errors need explanation.

I. *Antinomianiſm* is the error of ſuch *rigid* Calviniſts as exalt *Free-grace* in ſo injudicious a manner; and make ſo little account of *Free-will*, and its ſtartings aſide out of the way of duty; as to repreſent ſin at times, like a mere bug-bear, which can no more hurt the believer, who now commits it, than ſcare-crows can hurt thoſe, who ſet them up. They aſſert, that if a ſinner has once believed, he is not only ſafe, but eternally and completely juſtified from all *future* as well as paſt iniquities. The Pope's indulgences are nothing to thoſe, which theſe miſtaken evangeliſts preach. I have heard a Biſhop of Rome, who extended his popiſh indulgences, pardons, and juſtifications, to any crime which the indulged man might commit within ten years after the date: but theſe preach *finiſhed ſalvation* in the full extent of the word, without any of our own works, and by that means they extend their proteſtant indulgences to all eternity—to all believers in general—and to every crime, which each of them might chuſe

chuſe to commit. In a word, they preach the inamiſſible, complete juſtification of all fallen believers, who add murder to adultery, and an hypocritical ſhow of godlineſs to inceſt. Antinomianiſm, after all, is nothing but *rigid Calviniſm* dragged to open light by plain-ſpoken Preachers, who think that truth can bear the light, and that no honeſt man ſhould be aſhamed of his religion.

II. *Manicheiſm* is the capital error of *Manes*, a Perſian, who attempting to mend the goſpel of Chriſt, demoliſhed free-will, made man a mere paſſive tool, and taught, that there are two principles in the godhead, the one *good*, from which flows all the *good*, and the other *bad*, from which flows all the *evil* in the world. *Auguſtin* was once a *Manichee*, but afterwards he left their ſect, and refuted their errors. And yet, aſtoniſhing! when he began to lean to the doctrine of abſolute predeſtination, he ran again unawares, into the capital error of *Manes*. For if all the *good* and *bad* actions of angels, devils, and men, have their ſource in God's *abſolute predeſtination*, and *neceſſitating decrees*; it follows, that *vice* abſolutely ſprings from the *predeſtinating* God, as well as virtue; and, of conſequence, that *rigid Calviniſm* is a branch of *Manicheiſm* artfully painted with fair colours borrowed from chriſtianity.

III. *Diſguiſed Fataliſm* is nothing but an *abſolute neceſſity* of doing good or evil, according to the overbearing decrees, or forcible influences of *Manes's* God, who is made up of *free-grace* and of *free-wrath*, that is, of a *good* and *bad* principle. I call this doctrine *diſguiſed Fataliſm:* (1) Becauſe it implies the *abſolute neceſſity* of our actions; a neceſſity this, which the

the heathens called *fate:* and (2) Becauſe it is ſo horrible, that even thoſe who are moſt in love with it, dare not look at it, without ſome veil, or *diſguiſe*. *As the words fataliſm—Evil God—Good Devil*, or *Manichean Deity*, are not in the Bible; the chriſtian fataliſts do what they can to cover their error with decent expreſſions. The *good principle* of their Deity they accordingly call *Free-grace*, or *Everlaſting, unchangeable Love*. From this good principle flows their *abſolute election* and *finiſhed ſalvation*. With reſpect to the *bad principle*, it is true that they dare not openly call it *free-wrath*, or *everlaſting, unchangeable hatred*, as the honeſt Manichees did; but they give you dreadful hints, that it is a *ſovereign* ſomething in the Godhead, which *neceſſitates* reprobated angels and men to ſin:—ſomething which *ordains* their fall, and abſolutely *paſſes them by* when they are fallen;—ſomething which marks out unformed, unbegotten victims for the ſlaughter, and ſays to them [according to unchangeable decrees productive of abſolute *neceſſity*] "Depart ye curſed into everlaſting fire; for I paſſed you by: my abſolute reprobation eternally ſecured your ſin, and your continuance in ſin: and now, my unchangeable, everlaſting wrath abſolutely ſecures your eternal damnation. Go, ye abſolutely-reprobated wretches,—go, and glorify my free-wrath, which flamed againſt you, before the foundation of the world. My curſes and reprobation are without repentance."—There is not a grain of equity in all this ſpeech: and yet it agrees as truly with *rigid* Calviniſm, as with the above-deſcribed branch of Manicheiſm: it falls in as exactly with the neceſſitating, good-bad principle

ciple of *Manes*, as with the neceſſitating, good-bad principle of lawleſs *free-grace*, and abſolute *ſovereignty*—the ſofter name, which ſome goſpel Miniſters decently give to *free-wrath*.

IV. *Wide-reprobating bigotry* is the peculiar ſin of the men, who make ſo much of the doctrines of partial *grace*, as to pay little or no attention to the doctrines of impartial *juſtice*. This deſirable ſin was ſo deeply rooted in the breaſts of the Jews, that our Lord found himſelf obliged to work a miracle, that he might not be deſtroyed by it before the hour was come. Becauſe the Jews were the peculiar, and elected people of God, they uncharitably concluded, that all the heathens, i. e. all the reſt of mankind, were abſolutely reprobated, or at leaſt that God would ſhew them no mercy, unleſs they became proſelytes of the gate, and directly or indirectly embraced judaiſm. And therefore when Chriſt told them that many Gentiles would come from the Eaſt and Weſt, and ſit with Abraham in the kingdom of God, whilſt many of the Jews would be caſt out; and when he reproved their bigotry by reminding them, that in the days of Elijah God was more gracious to an heathen widow, than to all the widows that dwelt in Judea; they flew into a rage, and attempted to throw him down from the top of the craggy hill, on which the town of Nazareth was built. It is the ſame wide-reprobating bigotry, which makes the *rigid* Romaniſts think, that there is no ſalvation out of their church. Hence alſo the *rigid* Calviniſts imagine that there is no ſaving grace, but for thoſe who ſhare in their election of grace. It is impoſſible to conceive what bad tempers, fierce zeal, and bloody perſecutions,

cutions, this reprobating bigotry has caused in all the churches and nations, where the privileges of electing love have been carried beyond the scripture mark. Let us with candor read the history of the churches and people who have engrossed to themselves all the saving grace of God, and we shall cry out, From such a fierce election, and such reprobating bigotry, Good Lord deliver us!

I make no doubt but this sketch of the dangerous errors, to which *rigid Pelagianism* and *rigid Calvinism* lead unwary christians, will make the judicious reader afraid of these partial gospels, and will increase his thankfulness to God for the primitive gospel, which, by his doctrines of *grace*, guards us against *rigid Pelagianism* and its mischievous effects; and, by its doctrines of *justice*, arms us against *rigid Calvinism* and its dangerous consequences.

Among the Divines abroad, who have endeavoured to steer their doctrinal course between the *Pelagian* shelves and the *Augustinian* rocks, and who have tried to follow the reconciling plan of our great Reformer *Cranmer*, none is more famous, and none came nearer the truth than *Arminius*. He was a pious and judicious Dutch Minister, who in the beginning of the last century, taught divinity in the university of Leiden in Holland. He made some noble efforts to drive *Manicheism*, and *disguised Fatalism*, out of the protestant-church, of which he was a member: and, so far as his light and influence extended [by proving the evangelical union of Redeeming grace and Free-will] he restored scripture-harmony to the gospel, and carried on the plan of reconciliation, which Cranmer had laid down. His sermons, lectures,

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and orations, made many ashamed of absolute reprobation, and the bad-principled God, who was before quietly worshipped all over Holland. Nevertheless his attempt was partly unsuccessful: for, attacking *free-wrath* [or the *bad principle* of the Manichean God,] without setting *free-grace* in its *full* gospel light, and without *properly* granting the *election* of grace, which St. Paul contends for; he gave the Calvinists just room to complain. They availed themselves so skilfully of his embarrassment about the doctrine of election, and they pleaded so plausibly for the sovereignty of the *good*-principled God, as to keep their absolute reprobation, and the sovereignty of the bad-principled God partly out of sight. In short, implacable *free-wrath* escaped, by means of antinomian *free-grace*. The venomous scorpion concealed itself under the wing of the simple dove; and the double-principled Deity, the sparingly electing and widely-reprobating God, was still held forth to injudicious protestants, as the God of all grace—the *God of love*—the God *in whom is no darkness at all*. For, as I have already observed, a number of Divines after the heart of *Calvin*, assembled at *Dort* in Holland, and openly condemned there the efforts that *Arminius* had made to reconcile the doctrines of *justice* and the doctrines of *grace:* the Clergy who had espoused his sentiments were deprived of their livings; he himself was represented as the author of an *heresy* almost as dangerous as that of *Pelagius:* and, from that time, the rigid Calvinists have considered all those who stand up for the two gospel-axioms with any degree of consistency, as *semi-Pelagian*, or *Arminian* heretics.

Among

And if Mr. *Bailie* is not miſtaken, the Calviniſts did not complain of *Arminius's* doctrine altogether without reaſon; for, although he went very far in his diſcovery of the paſſage between the *Pelagian* and *Auguſtinian* rocks, yet he did ſail quite through. *Election* proved a rock, on which his doctrinal bark ſtuck faſt; nor could he ever get entirely clear of that difficulty.

Among our Engliſh divines, ſeveral have greatly diſtinguiſhed themſelves, by their improvements upon *Arminius's* diſcoveries. Biſhop Overal, Biſhop Stillingfleet, Biſhop Bull, Chillingworth, Baxter, Whitby, and others. But, if I am not miſtaken, they have all ſtruck were *Arminius* did, or on the oppoſite rock. And thereabout we ſtuck too, when Mr. Weſley got happily clear of a point of the Calvinian rock, which had retarded our courſe; and [ſo far as he appeared to us to be guided by the Father of lights] we began to ſail on with him thro' the ſtraits of truth. When we left our moorings, the partial defenders of the doctrines of grace hung out a ſignal of diſtreſs, and cried to us that our doctrinal ark was going to be loſt againſt the ſame cliff were Pelagius's bark went to pieces. Their ſhouts have made us wary. The Lord has, we humbly hope, bleſſed us with an anchor of patient hope, a gale of cheerful love of truth, and a ſhield of reſignation to quench the fiery darts, which ſome warm men, who defend the barren rock of abſolute reprobation, have thrown at us in our paſſage. We have founded our way, as we went on; and looking ſteadily to our theological compaſs, [the ſcriptures] to the ſun of righteouſneſs, [the Lord Jeſus Chriſt] and to the ſtars, which he holds in his right hand, [the

apoſtles

apoſtles and true evangeliſts] after ſailing ſlowly ſix years thro' ſtraits, where ſtrong currents of error and hard gales of prejudice have often retarded our progreſs; we flatter ourſelves, that we have got quite out of thoſe narrow and rocky ſeas, where moſt divines have been ſtopt for a long ſucceſſion of ages. If we are not miſtaken the ancient haven of goſpel-truth is in ſight; and while we enter in, I take a ſketch of it, which the reader will ſee in a plan of *Reconciliation* between the Calviniſts and Arminians, which theſe ſheets are deſigned to introduce.

THE RECONCILIATION;

OR,

AN EASY METHOD

TO UNITE

THE PROFESSING PEOPLE OF GOD,

By placing the Doctrines of *Grace* and *Juſtice* in ſuch a light, as to make the candid ARMINIANS Bible-CALVINISTS, and the candid CALVINISTS, Bible-ARMINIANS.

Veſtra ſolum legitis; veſtra amatis; cæteros, incognita cauſa, condemnatis. CIC.

'Follow peace with all men.—Look not every man on his own things' [*and favourite doctrines only*;] 'but every man alſo on the things' [*and favourite doctrines*] 'of others.'—'The wiſdom that is from above is peaceable, and without partiality.' Heb. xii. 14. Phil. ii. 4. Jam. iii. 17.

—TO

JAMES IRELAND, Esq;

OF

BRISLINGTON, near BRISTOL.

Dear Sir,

TO whom could a plan of reconciliation between the Calviniſts and Arminians be more properly dedicated than to a Son of peace, whoſe heart, hand and houſe are open to Calviniſts, Arminians, and neuters? You kindly receive the Divines, who contend for the doctrines of Grace; *and I want words to deſcribe the chriſtian courteſy, which you ſhew me, and other miniſters, who make a ſtand for* the doctrines of Juſtice. *To you I am indebted for the honour of a friendly interview with the Author of the* Circular Letter, *which I thought myſelf obliged to oppoſe. And*

*as you ſucceeded in that labour of love, it is natural for me to hope, that by your influence, and by the patronage of ſuch candid, generous peace-makers as the * Gentleman to whom I have often compared you, theſe reconciling ſheets will be peruſed by ſome with more attention than if they had no name prefixed to them but that of,*

Dear Sir,

Your moſt obliged, affectionate Friend and Servant,

JOHN FLETCHER.

NEWINGTON, Apr. 16, 1777.

* John Thornton, Eſq; *a great friend to a catholic goſpel.—If clergymen are backward to promote peace, the God of peace may provoke them to jealouſy, by raiſing from among the laity ſuch inſtruments of reconciliation, as will be a terror to bigotry, and an example of univerſal love.*

THE

THE

RECONCILIATION, &c.

SECTION I.

The ſad conſequences of the diviſions of thoſe, who make a peculiar profeſſion of faith in Chriſt. It is unſcriptural and abſurd to object, that believers can never be of one mind and heart.

UNSPEAKABLE is the miſchief done to the intereſts of religion by the diviſions of Chriſtians: and the greater their profeſſion is, the greater is the offence given by their conteſts. When the men who ſeek occaſion againſt the goſpel, ſee them contending for the truth, and never coming to an agreement, they aſk like Pilate, *What is Truth?* and then turn away from Chriſtianity, as that precipitate judge did from Chriſt.

Of all the controverſies which have given offence to the world, none has been kept up with more obſtinacy than that, which relates to divine grace and the nature of the goſpel. It was ſet on foot in the fourth century by Auguſtin and Pelagius, and was ſince warmly carried on by Godeſchalchus, Calvin, Arminius, and others. And it has lately been revived by Mr. Whitfield, and

and Mr. Wesley, and by the Author of *Pietas Oxonienſis* and the Orator of the Univerſity of Oxford. This unhappy controverſy has brought more contempt upon the goſpel for above twelve hundred years, than can well be conceived. Preachers intangled therein, inſtead of agreeing to build the temple of God, think themſelves obliged to pull down the ſcaffolds on which their brethren work. Shepherds, who ſhould join their forces to oppoſe the common enemy, militate againſt their fellow-ſhepherds: and their hungry followers are too frequently fed with controverſial chaff, when they ſhould be nouriſhed with the pure milk of the word. After the example of their leaders, the ſheep learn to butt, and wounds or leanneſs are the conſequences of the general debate. The weak are offended, and the lame turned out of the way. The godly mourn, and the wicked triumph: bad tempers are fomented; the helliſh-flame of party-zeal is blown up, and the ſouls of the contenders are pierced through with many ſorrows.

This is not all: The Spirit of God is grieved, and the converſion of ſinners prevented. How univerſally would the work of reformation have ſpread, if it had not been hindered by this growing miſchief! How many thouſands of ſcoffers daily ſay, Can theſe devotees expect we ſhould agree with them, when they cannot agree among themſelves? And indeed how can we reaſonably hope, that they ſhould give us the right hand of fellowſhip, if we cannot give it one another? *By this*, ſaith our Lord, *ſhall all men know that you are my diſciples, if ye love one another.* Continual diſputes are deſtructive of love; and the men of the world, ſeeing us cheriſh ſuch diſputes, naturally conclude that

that we are not true disciples of Christ, that there are none in the world, that the gospel is only a pious fraud or a fine legend, and that faith is nothing but fancy, superstition or enthusiasm.

Nor will such men be prevailed upon cordially to believe in Christ, till they see the generality of professors *made perfect in one*, by agreeing in doctrine, and *walking in love*. We may infer this from our Lord's prayer for his church. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word: that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe*, John xvii. 20, 21. Christ intimates in these words that the men of the world will never generally embrace the gospel, till the union he prayed for, takes place in believers. To keep up divisions therefore, is one of the most effectual methods to hinder the conversion of sinners, and strengthen the unbelief, which hardens their hearts.

The destructive nature of this sin, appears from the severity, with which St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians and Galatians, who were divided among themselves. The former, he could not acknowledge as *spiritual men*, but called them *Carnal*, and affirmed, that, *to their shame, some of* them *had not the knowledge of God*. And the latter he considered as persons almost *fallen from Christ*; intimating, that if they continued to *bite each other* [an expression which is beautifully descriptive of the malignity, with which most controvertists speak and write against their antagonists] they would *be consumed one of another*, Gal. v. 15.

In

In families and civil societies, divisions are truly deplorable: but in the churches of Christ they are peculiarly pernicious and scandalous. (1) *Pernicious*: To be persuaded of it, we need only consider these awful words of St. James: *If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom is devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work*, Jam. iii. 14, &c.—(2) *Scandalous*: If Christ be *the Prince of peace*; why should his subjects be sons of contention? If he came to reconcile Jews and Gentiles, by *breaking down the middle wall of partition between them*: if he *made in himself of twain* [of those two opposed bodies of men] *one new man* [i. e. one new body of men, *all of one heart and of one soul*] if he has *slain the enmity, so making peace*;—*if it pleaseth the Father to reconcile all things unto himself by him*;—and if *in the dispensation of the fulness of times* [the christian dispensation] *he gathers together all things in him*;—if this, I say, is the case; what can be more contrary to the gospel-plan, than the obstinacy, with which some protestants refuse to be *gathered together* with their fellow-protestants, under the shadow of their Redeemer's wings? And what can be more scandalous than for Christ's followers, yea for the strictest of them, to spend their time in building *middle walls of partition* between themselves and their brethren, or in *daubing over with untempered mortar*, the walls which mistaken men have built in former ages?

Many Jews refused to be saved by Christ, because he came to save the Gentiles as well as themselves. And it is to be feared, that some Christians, from a similar motive refuse the divine

vine favour, or the eminent degrees of it, to which they are called in the gospel. Christ says to these bigots, *How often would I have gathered you together, as a hen gathers her* scattered *brood under her wings? But ye would not:* ye were afraid of your Calvinian or Arminian brethren, and preferred the selfish heat of party-spirit, to the diffusive warmth of divine and brotherly love. I say *divine*, as well as *brotherly* love; for *he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen; how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?*

My regard for unity revives my drooping spirits, and adds new strength to my wasted body. I stop at the brink of the grave over which I bend: And, as the blood oozing from my decayed lungs, does not permit me vocally to address my contending brethren; by means of my pen I will ask them, if they can properly receive the holy *communion*, whilst they *wilfully* remain in *disunion* with their brethren from whom controversy has needlessly parted them? For my part, if I felt myself unwilling to be reconciled on scripture-terms, either with my Calvinian or Arminian neighbours, I would no more dare go to the Lord's table, than if I harboured murder in my heart; and this scripture would daily haunt my conscience, *Whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool* [Thou silly free-willer, Thou foolish bound-willer, Thou heretic!] *shall be in danger of hell-fire. Therefore, if thou bring thy gift before the altar, and there rememberest that thy* [Calvinian or Arminian] *brother hath ought against thee; leave thy gift and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly* —thy religious as well as thy civil adversary—

him,

him, with whom thou differeſt about the gold of the word; as well as him with whom thou contendeſt about the gold of this world.

Not to be reconciled when we properly may, is to *keep up* diviſions; and to *keep up* diviſions is as bad as to *cauſe* them. And what a dreadful thing it is to *cauſe* diviſions, appears from St. Paul's charge to the Romans: *I beſeech you, brethren, mark them who cauſe diviſions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them*, Rom. xvi. 17. *Avoid them*, for thoſe that have the itch of contention, and the plague of party-ſpirit, are not only in a dangerous caſe themſelves; but they carry about a mortal infection, which they frequently communicate to others.

Should party-men exclaim againſt my reconciling attempt, and ſay, "That there always were and always will be diviſions among the children of God, and that to aim at a general reconciliation, is to aim at an abſolute impoſſibility;" I reply,

(1) This plea countenances the luſts of the fleſh, *Walk in the Spirit*, ſays St. Paul, *and ye ſhall not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh*; and among theſe luſts, he immediately numbers *debate, emulations, wrath, contentions, and ſuch like*, obſerving at the ſame time, that *the fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, gentleneſs, meekneſs, &c.* Now when party-men inſinuate, that we can never live in *peace* and *harmony* with our Chriſtian brethren; do they not indirectly teach, that *debate, emulations, contentions, and ſuch like, muſt* ſtill waſte our time, diſturb our minds, and impair our love? And is not this an underhand-plea for a wretched obligation to neglect *the fruit of*

of the Spirit, and for an Antinomian neceſſity to bring forth the *fruit of the fleſh?*

(2) It militates againſt St. Paul's conflict for believers: *I would* [ſays he to the Coloſſians] *that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not ſeen my face in the fleſh; that their hearts might be comforted; being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding, to the acknowledgment of the myſtery of God*, Col. ii. 1, 2.—It oppoſes alſo the end of the Apoſtle's prayer for the Romans.—*The God of patience and conſolation grant you to be like-minded, &c. that you may with one mind, and one mouth glorify God, &c. Wherefore receive you one another, as Chriſt alſo received us*, Rom. xv. 5, &c. But what is far worſe, it directly contradicts Chriſt's capital prayer, which I have already quoted. *I pray*, ſays he, *that they* [believers] *may be one, as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee: that they alſo may be one in us:—that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; that the* [unbelieving] *world may know that thou haſt ſent me*, John xvii. 20, &c. Now if our Lord aſked for an abſolute impoſſibility, when he aſked the perfect union of believers in this life; where was his *wiſdom?* And if he cannot make us *one* in heart and mind [ſuppoſing we are willing to abide by his reconciling word,] where is his power?

(3) It ſtrikes at the authority of theſe evangelical entreaties, exhortations, and commands: *Be of the ſame mind*, Rom. xii. 16.—*I beſeech you brethren by the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that ye all ſpeak the ſame thing, and*

that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment, 1 Cor. i. 10.—*Finally, brethren, be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind; live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you,* 2 Cor. xiii. 11.—*Let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that—I may hear ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind; striving together for the faith of the gospel—Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded—being of one accord, of one mind.—I beseech Euodias and Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord,* Phil. i. 27.—ii. 2.—iv. 2.—*Finally be ye all of one mind, &c. Love as brethren, be courteous.—For he that will see good days, &c. let him speak peace* [with his enemies, much more with his brethren;] *and let him pursue it,* 1 Pet. iii. 8, &c.—*Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing,* Phil. iii. 16.—*With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. For there is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all,* Eph. iv. 2, &c.—The same Apostle, writing to the divided Corinthians, tries to reconcile them by comparing again the body of believers to the human body, and drawing a suitable inference: *The body is one* [says he,] *though it hath many members;—that there should be no schism* [no division] *in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another; all suffering when one member suffers, and all rejoicing when one member is honoured,* 1 Cor. xii. 12—26. Hence

it

it follows, that to plead for the continuance of *ſchiſms* or *diviſions* in Chriſt's myſtical *body*, is evidently to plead for a breach of *the bond of peace*, and for the neglect of all the above-mentioned apoſtolic injunctions.

(4) It gives the lie to the following promiſes of the God of truth. *The hatred of Ephraim ſhall depart, &c. Ephraim ſhall not envy Judah, neither ſhall Judah vex Ephraim*, Iſa. xi. 13.—*I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them and of their children*, Jer. xxxii. 39.—*I will give them one heart, and I will put a new ſpirit within them.* Ez. xi. 19.—*I will turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to ſerve him with one conſent, &c.—Other ſheep I have, which are not of this fold. Them alſo, I muſt bring, and they ſhall hear my voice; and there ſhall be one fold, and one ſhepherd*, John x. 16.

(5) It contradicts the following account of God's faithfulneſs, in the initial accompliſhment of the preceding promiſes. *They were all with one accord in one place;—continuing daily with one accord in the temple*, Acts ii. 1. 46.—*The multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one ſoul*, Acts iv. 32.—*If we walk in the light, &c. we have fellowſhip one with another.* For *he that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is in him no occaſion of ſtumbling:* [nothing in his heart will either cauſe or keep diviſions.] 1 John i. 7.—ii. 10.—*We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, becauſe your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth*, 2. Theſſ. i. 3. —*By one Spirit all* complete Chriſtians *are*

baptized into one body, whether they *be Jews or Gentiles, whether* they *be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit*—the Spirit of truth and love, and [unleſs they leave their firſt love, as the Corinthians did] they ſweetly continue to *keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*, 1 Cor. xii. 13. Eph. iv. 3.—From theſe accounts of the unity of the primitive chriſtians before they *left their firſt love*, I infer, that unity is attainable, becauſe it was attained. The arm of the Lord is not ſhortened; *The ſame Lord over all* is *rich unto all that call upon him*; and if we be not obſtinately bent upon deſpiſing the *wiſdom from above, which is peaceable, gentle, eaſy to be entreated, full of good fruit, and without partiality*; we ſhall find that *the fruit of righteouſneſs is ſown in peace of them that make peace*; and we ſhall evidence that all the ſincere followers of Chriſt can yet *continue ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtle's doctrine and fellowſhip*, inſtead of perverſely continuing in their own miſtakes and in the ſpirit of diſcord.

Laſtly: The objection, I anſwer, has a tendency to ſtop the growth of Chriſt's myſtical body, and oppoſes God's grand deſign in ſending the goſpel: *for He gave Apoſtles, Evangeliſts, and Paſtors, for the perfecting of the ſaints, and the edifying of the body of Chriſt; till all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt: that we may be no more carried about with every wind of doctrine, &c. but ſpeaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Chriſt; from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted*

fected by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love: Eph. iv. 11—16. No believer can, I think, candidly read these words of the Apostle, without being convinced, that *union* and *growth* are inseparable in the Church of *Christ, from whom all the body, by joints and bands having nourishment* [or help] *ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God,* Col. ii. 19.

From these observations, I hope, it appears, that, whether we consider the earnest entreaties of the Apostles—their conflicts and pious wishes for their converts—the wisdom of our Lord's address to his Father for the union of believers—the repeated commands of the gospel to be of *one mind* and *one judgment*—the promises which God has made to help us to keep those commands—the divine power, by which the primitive believers were actually enabled to keep them, so long as they walked in the spirit;—or whether we consider the end of evangelical preaching, and the unity and growth of Christ's mystical body; nothing can be more *unscriptural* than to say, that believers can never be again *of one heart* and *of one mind.*

And as this notion is unscriptural, so it is *irrational*; in as much as it supposes, that the children of God can never agree to serve him, as the children of the wicked one do to honour their master; for St. John informs us, that *These have one mind to give their power and strength unto the beast,* Rev. xvii. 13. And experience daily teaches, that when the men of the world are embarked in the same scheme, they can perfectly agree in the pursuit of wealth, pleasure and

ſame, or in the performance of duty. If ſhips that ſail under the command of the ſame Admiral, do not give each other a broadſide, becauſe they have different Captains, and are employed in different ſervices:—if ſoldiers, who follow the ſame General, do not quarrel becauſe they belong to different regiments, becauſe their coats are not turned up alike, or becauſe they do not defend the ſame fort, fight in the ſame wing of the army, hear the ſame drum, and follow the ſame pair of colours:—and if the king's faithful ſervants can unanimouſly promote his intereſts, and cheerfully lend each other an helping hand, though their departments are as different, as the fleet is different from the army, is it not abſurd to ſuppoſe, that Chriſt's *faithful* ſoldiers and ſervants, who are the meekeſt, the humbleſt, the moſt diſintereſted, and moſt loving of all men, can never lie in perfect union, and ſweetly agree to promote the intereſts of their divine Maſter? I conclude therefore, that the objection which ſuppoſes the contrary, is not leſs contrary to reaſon than to the word of God.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Pious moderate Calviniſts, and pious moderate Arminians in particular, may be eaſily reconciled to each other; becauſe the doctrines of Grace and Juſtice, about which they divide, are equally ſcriptural, and each party contends for a capital part of goſpel-truth; their grand miſtake conſiſting in a groundleſs ſuppoſition, that the part of the truth they defend, is incompatible with the part which is defended by their brethren.

SOME perſons will probably make a more plauſible objection, than that which is anſwered in the preceding pages. They will urge, "That truth ſhould never be ſacrificed to love and peace; that the Calviniſts and Arminians holding doctrines diametrically oppoſite, one party at leaſt, muſt be totally in the wrong; and, as the other party ought not to be reconciled to error, the agreement I propoſe is impoſſible: it will never take place, unleſs the Calviniſts can be prevailed upon to give up *unconditional Election*, and their favourite doctrines of *partial Grace*; or the Arminians can be perſuaded to part with *conditional Election*, and their favourite doctrines of *impartial Juſtice*; and as this is too great a ſacrifice to be expected from either party, it is in vain to attempt bringing about a reconciliation between them."

This

This objection is weighty: but far from discouraging me, it affords me an opportunity of laying before my readers the ground of the hope I entertain, to reconcile the Calvinists and the Arminians. I should indeed utterly despair of effecting it, were I obliged to prove that either party is entirely in the wrong. But I may without folly expect some success, because my grand design is to demonstrate that both parties have an important truth on their side; both holding opposite doctrines, which are as essential to the fulness of Christ's gospel, as the two eyes, nostrils and cheeks, which compose our faces, are essential to the completeness of human beauty.

"The language of scripture seems to favour the one as well as the other" [*says Dr. Watts on a similar occasion*;] "But this is the mischief that ariseth between Christians who differ in their sentiments or expression of things; they imagine that while one is true, the other must needs be false:—and then they brand each other with error and heresy: whereas, if they would but attend to scripture, that would shew them to be both in the right, by its different explication of their own forms of speaking.—In this way of reconciliation I cannot but hope for some success, because it falls in with the universal fond esteem, that each man has of his own understanding: it proves that two warm disputers may both have truth on their side: now if ten persons differ in their sentiments, it is much easier to persuade *all* of them that they may be all in the right, than it is to convince *one* that he is in the wrong?"

I shall illustrate this quotation by a remark, which occurs in the beginning of my *Scripture-Scales*;

Scales; only taking the liberty of applying to pious Calviniſts and pious Arminians, what I ſaid there of pious Solifidians and pious Moraliſts. "The cauſe of their miſunderſtanding is ſingular. They are good men upon the whole; therefore they can never oppoſe truth *as truth*: and, as they are not deſtitute of charity, they cannot quarrel merely for quarrelling's ſake. Whence then ſpring their continual diſputes? Is it not from inattention and partiality? They will not look *Truth* full in the face: determined to ſtand on one ſide of her, they ſeldom ſee above the half of her beauty. The rigid Calviniſts gaze upon her ſide-face on the right-hand, and the rigid Arminians contemplate it on the left. But her unprejudiced lovers, humbly ſitting at her feet, and beholding her in full, admire the exquiſite proportion of *all* her features: a peculiar advantage this, which her *partial* admirers can never have in their preſent unfavourable poſition."

To be more explicit: a rigid Calviniſt has no eyes but for *God's ſovereignty, unconditional election*, and *the doctrines of partial grace*; whilſt a rigid Arminian conſiders nothing but *God's equity, conditional Election*, and *the doctrines of impartial juſtice*. And therefore, to unite theſe contending rivals, you need only prevail on the Arminians to bow to God's Sovereignty, to acknowledge an *unconditional* election, and to receive the doctrines of *partial grace*; and as ſoon as they do this they will be reconciled to Bible-Calviniſm and to all moderate Calviniſts. And on the other hand, if the Calviniſts can be convinced that they ſhould bow to *God's equity*, acknowledge a *conditional election*, and receive *the doctrines of*

of impartial juſtice; they will be reconciled to Bible-Arminianiſm, and to all *moderate* Arminians? Should it be ſaid, that it is impoſſible to convince the Arminians of the truth of an *unconditional election*, *&c.* and that the Calviniſts will never receive the doctrine of a *conditional election*, *&c.* I anſwer, that *bigots* of either party will not be convinced, becauſe they all pretend to infallibility, though they do not pretend to wear a triple crown. But the *candid*, on both ſides of the queſtion, lie open to conviction, and will I hope, yield to the force of plain ſcripture and ſound reaſon, the two weapons, with which I deſign to attack their prejudices.

But before I open my friendly attack, I beg leave, candid Reader, to ſhow thee the ground, on which I will erect my ſcriptural and rational batteries. It is made up of the following reaſonable propoſitions.

I. When good men warmly contend about truth, you may in general be aſſured that if truth can be compared to a ſtaff, each party has one end of the ſtaff, and that to have the whole you need only conſiſtently hold together what they inconſiderately pull aſunder.—(2) The goſpel contains doctrines of *partial grace* and *unconditional election*, as well as doctrines of *impartial juſtice* and *unconditional election*, nor can we embrace the whole truth of the goſpel, unleſs we conſiſtently hold thoſe ſeemingly contrary doctrines. (3) Thoſe oppoſite doctrines which *rigid* Calviniſts and Arminians ſuppoſe to be abſolutely incompatible, agree as well together as the following pair of propoſitions: God has a *throne of grace* and a *throne of juſtice*; nor is the former throne inconſiſtent with the latter.—

God

God as the *Creator* and *Governor* of mankind, ſuſtains the double character of *Sovereign Benefactor* and *righteous Judge:* and the firſt of theſe characters is perfectly conſiſtent with the ſecond. This is the ground of my reconciling plan. And this ground is ſo ſolid, that I hardly think any unprejudiced perſon will even enter his proteſt againſt it. Were Divines to do it, they would render themſelves as ridiculous as a pilot, who ſhould ſuppoſe that the head and ſtern of the veſſel he is called to conduct can never be two eſſential parts of the ſame ſhip.

If Chriſtianity were compared to a ſhip, the doctrines of *grace* might be likened to the forepart, and the doctrines of *juſtice* to the hinder part of it: this obſervation brings to my remembrance a quotation from Dr. Doddridge, which will help the reader to underſtand how it is poſſible that *an election of grace* maintained by moderate Calviniſts, and *an election of juſtice* defended by moderate Arminians, may both be true. "I have long obſerved" [ſays the judicious doctor] "that Chriſtians of different parties have been eagerly laying hold on *particular Parts* of the ſyſtem of divine Truths, and have been contending about them as if *each* had been *all*; or as if the ſeparation of the members from each other, and from the head, were the preſervation of the body inſtead of its deſtruction. They have been zealous to eſpouſe the defence, and to maintain the honour and uſefulneſs of *each apart*; whereas their honour as well as uſefulneſs, ſeems to me to lie much in *their connexion:* and ſuſpicions have often ariſen betwixt the reſpective Defenders of each, which have appeared as unreaſonable

and

and abſurd, as if all the preparations for ſecuring one part of the ſhip in a ſtorm, were to be cenſured as a contrivance to ſink the reſt." In the name of God, the God of wiſdom, truth and peace, let then the defenders of the doctrines of *grace* ceaſe to fall out with the defenders of the doctrines of *juſtice*, and let both parties ſeek the happy *connexion*, which Dr. Doddridge ſpeaks of, and rejoice in that part of the truth peculiarly held by brethren, as well as in that part of the goſpel, to which they have hitherto been peculiarly attached.

Many good men, on both ſides of the queſtion, have *at times* pointed out the connexion of the oppoſite doctrines, which are maintained in theſe ſheets. Mr. Henry, a judicious Calviniſt, does it in his notes on the parable of the talents, where he contends for the doctrines of *partial grace* and *impartial juſtice*, and exalts God both as a *ſovereign Benefactor*, and a *righteous Judge*. Commenting upon theſe words, *Take therefore the talent from him* [*the ſlothful ſervant*] he ſays, "The talents were *firſt* diſpoſed of by the Maſter as *an abſolute Owner*" [i. e. a *ſovereign Benefactor, who does what he pleaſes with his own*] But this was now diſpoſed of by him as *a Judge:* he takes it from the unfaithful ſervant to *puniſh* him, and gives it to him that was eminently faithful to *reward* him." This is *rightly dividing the word of truth*, and wiſely diſtinguiſhing between the throne of *grace* and that of *juſtice!*

Dr. John Heylyn, a judicious *Arminian*, in his diſcourſe on 1 Tim. iv. 10, is as candid as Mr. Henry in the above quoted note; for he ſtands up for God's Sovereignty and the doctrine of partial

partial Grace, as much as Mr. Henry does for God's equity, and the doctrine of impartial Juſtice. After pointing out in ſtrong terms the error of thoſe who, by ſetting aſide the doctrines of Juſtice, "ſap * the foundation of all religion, which is the moral character of the Deity, he adds:

"Nor, on the other hand, do † they leſs offend againſt the *natural prerogative*, I mean, the *abſolute Sovereignty* of God, who deny him the free exerciſe of his bounty, as they ſeem too much inclined to do, who are backward to believe the great diſparity among mankind with regard to a future ſtate, which revelation always ſuppoſes.—His mercy is over all his works, but that mercy abounds to ſome *much more* than to others, according to the inſcrutable *counſel of his own will*. Nor is there a ſhadow of injuſtice in ſuch *unequal* diſtribution of his favours. The term *Favours*, implies *freedom* in beſtowing them; elſe they were not favours, but *debts*. The Almighty Maker is maſter of all his productions. Both *matter* and *form* are his: all is gift, all is bounty: nor may the lizard complain of his ſize, becauſe there are crocodiles; nor is the worm injured by the creation of an eagle."

I ſhall conclude this ſection by producing the ſentiments of two perſons, whoſe authority is infinitely greater than that of Mr. Henry and Dr. Heylyn. Who exceeds St. Paul in orthodoxy? And yet, what Calviniſt ever maintained the doctrines of Grace more ſtrongly than he does? *By the Grace of God*, ſays he, *I am what I am*,

* He means the rigid Calviniſts.

† He means the rigid Arminians.

1 Cor. xv. 10.—*By grace you are saved* [i. e. admitted into the high state of Christian salvation] *through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God:*—[a special gift, which God has kept back from far the greatest part of the world:] *not of works, lest any man should boast*, Eph. ii. 8.—*At this time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace*, Rom. xi. 5, 6.—*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us,*] or made us partakers of the glorious privileges of Christians, which he has denied to millions of the human race,] Tit. iii. 5.—*He is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe*; for he saves *Christians* with a special salvation, which is called *the great salvation*, 1 Tim. iv. 10. Heb. ii. 3. Christ indeed *is not the propitiation for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world.* 1 John ii 2. Nevertheless he is especially *our Mediator, our Passover* or paschal lamb, and *the High-priest of our* [christian] *profession, in whom God hath chosen us* [christians] *before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy* above all people; *Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, to the praise of the glory of his grace:* an high *adoption*, which is so superior to that, to which the Jews had been predestinated in Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses, that St. Paul spends part of his Epistle to the Ephesians in asserting the honour of it, and in extolling the glory of the peculiar grace *given unto us in Christ.* And if you exclaim against this divine partiality, the Apostle silences you by a just appeal to God's sovereignty. See Rom. ix. 20.

But

But was St. Paul Calviniſtically partial? Did he ſo contend for the doctrines of *grace*, as to caſt a veil over the doctrines of *juſtice?* Stands he not up for the latter, as boldly as he does for the former? What Arminian ever bowed before the throne of divine *juſtice* more deeply than he does in the following ſcriptures? *God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love*, Heb. vi. 10.—*I have fought the good fight, &c. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord the righteous Judge ſhall give at that day*, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. Theſe paſſages ſtrongly ſupport the doctrines of *juſtice*, but thoſe which follow may be conſidered as the very ſummit of ſcripture-Arminianiſm. *Knowing that whatſoever good thing any man doth, the ſame ſhall he receive of the Lord*, Eph. vi. 8.—*Whatſoever ye do, do it heartily, &c. knowing that of the Lord ye ſhall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye ſerve the Lord Chriſt. But he that does wrong, ſhall receive* [adequate puniſhment] *for the wrong which he hath done*, Col. iii. 23, &c.—*We muſt all appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that which he hath done, whether it be good or bad*, 2 Cor. v. 10.—*In the day of wrath, and revelation of his righteous judgment, God will render to every man according to his deeds; eternal life to them, who by patient continuance in well-doing ſeek for glory, honour and immortality: but indignation and wrath to them, that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteouſneſs &c. for* [before the throne of juſtice] *there is no reſpect of perſons with God*, Rom. ii. 5.

Should it be aſked, how theſe ſeemingly contrary doctrines of *grace* and *juſtice* can be reconciled; I reply: they agree as perfectly together as the *firſt* and *ſecond advent* of our Lord. At his firſt coming, he ſuſtained the *gracious* character of a *Saviour*; and at his ſecond coming, he will ſuſtain the *righteous* character of a *Judge*. Hear him explaining the myſtery, which is hid from the rigid Calviniſts and the rigid Arminians. Speaking of his *firſt* coming he ſays: *I came not to judge the world, but to ſave the world*, by procuring for mankind different talents of initial ſalvation; a leſs number for the Heathens, more for the Jews, and moſt for the Chriſtians, who are his moſt peculiar people;—*For God ſent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be ſaved*, John xii. 47.—iii. 17.—*The ſon of man is come to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt*, Luke xix. 10. *Ye have not choſen me, but I have choſen you, and ordained you, that you ſhould go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit ſhould remain*, John xv. 16. Here are doctrines of *grace!* But did our Lord ſo preach theſe doctrines as to deſtroy thoſe of juſtice? Did he ſo magnify his coming to *ſave* the world, as to make nothing of his coming to *judge* the world? No: hear him ſpeaking of this *ſecond* advent. *When the ſon of man ſhall come in his glory, and before him ſhall be gathered all nations, and he ſhall ſeparate the one from another*—[them that have done good from them that have done evil] *and theſe ſhall go away into everlaſting puniſhment, but the righteous into life eternal*, Matt. xxv. 31, 32, 46—*Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man*

man according as his work shall be, Rev. xxii. 12.—*For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his* [the son of man's] *voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation*, John v. 28, 29. Here are doctrines of *justice!* And the man who says, that *such* doctrines are not as scriptural as the above-mentioned doctrines of *grace*, may as well deny the succession of day and night.

Dr. Watts, in his excellent book entitled *Orthodoxy and Charity united*, gives us a direction which will suitably close the preceding appeal to the Scriptures. "*Avoid* [says he] *the high flights and extremes of zealous party-men, &c.* You will tell me perhaps, that scripture itself uses expressions as high upon particular occasions, and as much leaning to extremes as any men of party among us. But remember then, that the Scripture uses such strong and high expressions not on one side *only*, but on *both sides*, and infinite wisdom hath done this more forcibly to impress some present truth or duty: but while it is evident the holy Writers have used high expressions, strong figures of speech, and vehement turns *on both sides*, this sufficiently instructs us that we should be moderate in our censures of either side, and that the calm doctrinal truth, stript of all rhetoric and figures, lies *nearer to the middle*, or at least that some of these *appearing extremes* are more reconcilable than angry men will generally allow. If the Apostle charges the Corinthians, *So run that ye may obtain*, 1 Cor. ix. 24. and tells the Romans, *It is*

not of him that willeth, or of him that runneth, but of God who sheweth mercy, Rom. ix. 16. we may plainly infer that *our running* and *his mercy*,—*our diligence* and *divine grace*, are both neceſſary to ſalvation."

From all theſe ſcriptures it evidently follows: (1) That, as God is both a *Benefactor*, and *a Governor*, a *Saviour*, and a *Judge:* he has both a *throne of grace*, and a *throne of juſtice:*—(2) That thoſe believers are highly partial, who worſhip only before one of the divine thrones, when the ſacred oracles ſo loudly bid us to pay our homage before both:—(3) That the *doctrines of grace* are the ſtatutes and decrees iſſuing from the *former* throne: and that the *doctrines of juſtice* are the ſtatutes and decrees iſſuing from the *latter:*—(4) That the principal of all the *doctrines of grace* is, that there is an *election of grace:* and that the principal of all the *doctrines of juſtice* is, that there is an *election of juſtice*:—(5) That the *former* of thoſe elections is *conditional* and *partial*; as depending merely on the good pleaſure of our gracious Benefactor and Saviour: and that the *latter* of thoſe elections is *conditional* and *impartial*; as depending merely on the *juſtice* and *equity* of our righteous Governor and Judge: for juſtice admits of no partiality, and equity never permits a Ruler to judge any men but ſuch as are free-agents, or to ſentence any free agent otherwiſe than according to his own works:—(6) That the confounding or not properly diſtinguiſhing thoſe two elections, and the reprobations which they draw after them, has filled the church with confuſion, and is the grand cauſe of the diſputes which deſtroy our peace:—And (laſtly) that to reſtore

peace

peace to the church, these two elections must be fixed upon their proper, scriptural basis which is attempted in the following section.

SECT. III.

Eight pair of opposite propositions, on which the opposite doctrines of Grace and Justice are founded, and which may be considered as the basis of Bible-Calvinism and Bible-Arminianism, and as a double key to open the mysteries of election and reprobation.

Scripture-ground of Calvinism, and the doctrines of Grace.

PROPOSITION I.

GOD is original, eternal and unbounded Life, Light, Love, and Purity: and therefore, wherever these blessings are found in any degree, they originally come from him, the overflowing fountain of all that is excellent in the natural, moral, and spiritual world.

Scripture-ground of Arminianism, and the doctrines of Justice.

PROPOSITION I.

THERE is no Death, Darkness, Free-Wrath, or Sin in God: and therefore, these evils, wherever they are found, originally flow from inferior agents, whose free-will may become the fountain of all evil: for when free-agents chuse first the *evil of sin*, God is obliged in justice to chuse next the *evil of punishment*. Thus *moral evil* draws *natural evil* after it.

II. God

Doctrines of Grace.

II. God is an infinitely wife *Benefactor*, full of goodneſs and *Grace*.

III. It ſeems highly inconſiſtent with the *wiſdom* of a *Creator* and *Benefactor*, to make all his creatures of the ſame ſize and rank, and to deal out his bounties to them in the ſame meaſure. To ſay that he ſhould do it, is as abſurd as to affirm, that his goodneſs requires him to make every inſect as big as an elephant, and every ſpire of graſs as tall as an oak.

IV. For want of conſidering the preceding, ſelf-evident propoſitions, and their neceſſary conſequences, the heated advocates for the doctrines of *juſtice* have erred, either by denying, or by not fully granting theſe two undeniable truths: (1) All good comes originally from God's free-grace, and

Doctrines of Juſtice.

II. God is an infinitely wiſe *Governor*, full of equity and *Juſtice*.

III. It ſeems highly inconſiſtent with the *equity* of a *Governor* and a *Judge*, to decree that millions of rational creatures ſhall be born in a graceleſs, ſinful and remedileſs ſtate; that he may diſplay his righteous ſovereignty by paſſing a ſentence of death and eternal torments upon them, for being found in the ſtate of remedileſs corruption, in which his irreſiſtible decree has placed them.

IV. For want of conſidering the preceding, ſelf-evident propoſitions, and their unavoidable conſequences, the heated advocates for the doctrines of *grace* have erred, by directly or indirectly maintaining theſe two capital untruths: (1) Some real evil can originally flow from that part of God's pre-

Doctrines of Grace.

and overflowing fulneſs: (2) God, as a ſovereign Benefactor, may do what he pleaſes with his own. Nor ſhould our *eye be evil, becauſe he is good*, and diſplays his *ſuperabounding* goodneſs towards *ſome* men, more than he does towards others.

V. The grand miſtake of the *rigid* Arminians conſiſts then in not frankly aſcribing to God all the original goodneſs, and gracious ſovereignty, which belong to him as the ſovereign Author and firſt parent of all good.

VI. Would you get clear of the error of rigid Arminians; not only aſſert God's *grace* and *goodneſs*; inſiſting that he is the *firſt cauſe* and *eternal parent* of *all* good, natural and ſpiritual,

Doctrines of Juſtice.

predeſtination, which is generally called *abſolute reprobation*, or *predeſtination to eternal death.* (2) God, as a Sovereign, may abſolutely ordain ſome of his rational creatures to eternal death, before they have *perſonally* deſerved it: or, which is all one, he may ſo paſs by unborn children as to enſure their continuance in ſin, and their everlaſting damnation.

V. The grand miſtake of the *rigid* Calviniſts conſiſts then in indirectly aſcribing to God ſome original evil, and a reprobating Sovereignty, which is irreconcilable with the *goodneſs* of a *Creator*, and the *equity* of a *Judge.*

VI. Would you on the other hand, get clear of the error of rigid Calviniſts; not only maintain in general that God is *juſt*; but confidently aſſert, that he utterly diſclaims a ſovereignty, which

ritual, temporal and eternal: but boldly ſtand up alſo for his *free*-grace and exuberant goodneſs; maintaining that he has the moſt unbounded right to diſpenſe the peculiar bounties of his grace, without any reſpect to our works. *For the children* [Eſau and Jacob] *not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpoſe of God according to* [the] *election* [of ſuperior grace] *might ſtand, not of works, but of him that* [arbitrarily chuſeth and] *calleth; it was ſaid,* [not the one is abſolutely ordained to eternal death, and the other abſolutely ordained to eternal life; but] *the elder ſhall ſerve the younger:* the younger ſhall have a ſuperior bleſſing. And in this reſpect, *it is not* at all *of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God, who* moſt freely and abſolutely *ſheweth mercy,* or which diſpenſes *rewards* and *puniſhments* from a throne of juſtice, otherwiſe than according to works: witneſs his own repeated declarations: —*I ſaid indeed that thy houſe,* &c. *ſhould walk before me for ever: but now be it far from me: for them that honour me, I will honour; and they that deſpiſe me ſhall be lightly eſteemed,* 1 Sam. ii. 30.—Again: *If the wicked man will turn from all his ſins, he ſhall ſurely live,* &c. *But when the righteous man turneth away from his righteouſneſs,* &c. *in his ſin that he hath ſinned ſhall he die. Yet ye ſay, the way of the Lord is not equal.—O houſe of Iſrael, are not my ways equal? Are not your ways unequal? Therefore I will judge you, every one according to his ways, ſaith the Lord. Repent,* &c. *for I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth,* Ez. xviii. 21, &c. Hence it

Doctrines of Grace.

or *favour*, Rom. ix. 11. 12, 16.—Hence it appears, that to deny a *partial election* of diſtinguiſhing grace, is equally to fly in the face of St. Paul and of Reaſon.

VII. When we conſider the election of *partial Grace*, and the harmleſs reprobation that attends it, we may boldly aſk with St. Paul: *Hath not the Potter power over the clay of the ſame lump, to make one veſſel unto* [ſuperior] *honour, and* another unto* [comparative]

Doctrines of Juſtice.

it appears, that with reſpect to the election and reprobation of *juſtice*, God's decrees, ſo far as they affect our *perſonal* ſalvation or damnation, are regulated according to our perſonal righteouſneſs or ſin, that is, according to our works.

VII. When we conſider the election of *impartial Juſtice*, and the fearful reprobation that anſwers to it, we may ſay with St. Peter, *If ye call on the Father, who without reſpect of perſons judgeth according to every man's work, paſs the time of your ſojourning here in*

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* To underſtand Rom. ix. we muſt remember, that the Apoſtle occaſionally ſpeaks of the *election and reprobation of juſtice*; although his firſt deſign is to eſtabliſh the *election of grace*, and the harmleſs *reprobation* which anſwers to it. When he ſpeaks of *Jacob* and *Eſau*, he contends for the *election of grace*: and when he brings in *Pharaoh* and *the veſſels of wrath*, who by their obſtinate unbelief have provoked vindictive wrath to harden them, or to give them up to the hardneſs of their hearts, he ſpeaks of the *election of juſtice*. The paſſage to which this note refers, is the Apoſtle's tranſition from the one election to the other, and may be applied to both: I have applied it here to the election of grace. But if you apply it to the *election* of

tive] *diſhonour?* Cannot God ordain, that of two unborn children, the one [as Jacob] ſhall be appointed to ſuperior bleſſings, and [in this ſenſe] ſhall be *more loved*; whilſt the other [as Eſau] ſhall be deprived of thoſe bleſſings, and [in this ſenſe] ſhall be *leſs loved*, or comparatively *hated? As it is written, Jacob have I loved, and Eſau have I hated*, Rom. ix. 13.—When we ſpeak of the ſame election, we may ſay, as the Maſter of the vineyard did to the envious labourer, *Is thine eye evil, becauſe* the Maſter *in fear*, 1 Pet. i. 17. *God is no reſpecter of perſons: but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted of him*, Acts x. 34. We may add with Chriſt, *In the day of judgment, men ſhall give account of their words. For by thy words thou ſhalt be juſtified, and by thy words thou ſhalt be condemned*, Matt. xii. 36, 37.—And we may humbly expoſtulate with God, as Abraham did: *That be far from thee to do after this manner, to ſlay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous ſhould be as the wicked, that be far from thee:*

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juſtice, the meaning is: hath not the Governor and Judge of all the earth, authority over all mankind, as being their Sovereign and Lawgiver? Can he not fix the terms, on which he will reward or puniſh his ſubjects?—the terms on which he will give them more grace, or take from them the talent of grace which they have buried, and leave them to the rigour of his law?—Can he not appoint, that *obedient believers* ſhall be ſaved, or *elected* to eternal ſalvation; and that his mark of judicial *reprobation* ſhall be fixed upon all obſtinate unbelievers, as Pharaoh and his hoſt certainly were.

Doctrines of Grace.

ter of the univerſe *is good?* Matt. xx. 15.

VIII. From the preceding propoſitions it evidently follows, that when God is conſidered as electing and reprobating the children of men from his throne of *grace*, his election and reprobation are *partial* and *unconditional.*

Doctrines of Juſtice.

thee: ſhall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Gen. xviii. 25.

VIII. From the preceding propoſitions it evidently follows, that when God is conſidered as electing and reprobating the children of men from his throne of *juſtice*, his election and reprobation are *impartial* and *conditional.*

Having thus laid down the rational and ſcriptural ground of *Bible-Calviniſm*, which centers in the *partial election of grace*,—and of *Bible-Arminianiſm*, which centers in the *impartial election of Juſtice*; I ſhall ſhew the nature, excellence, and agreement of both ſyſtems in an Eſſay, which I truſt, will convert judicious Arminians to ſcripture-Calviniſm, and judicious Calviniſts to ſcripture-Arminianiſm.

SECT. IV.

Bible-Calviniſm and Bible-Arminianiſm are plainly ſtated and equally vindicated, in a two-fold Eſſay on the doctrines of partial grace and impartial juſtice. Thoſe oppoſite doctrines are ſhewn to be highly agreeable to reaſon and ſcripture, and perfectly conſiſtent with each other.

ON the eight pair of balanced propoſitions, which are produced in the preceding ſection, I reſt the two balanced Eſſays which follow. I humbly recommend the *firſt* to *rigid* Arminians; becauſe it contains a view of *Bible-Calviniſm*, of the *doctrines of grace*, and of the *abſolute*, *unconditional*, and *partial election*, to which *they* perpetually object. And I earneſtly recommend the *ſecond* Eſſay to *rigid* Calviniſts, becauſe it contains a view of *Bible-Arminianiſm*, of the *doctrines of juſtice*, and the *judicial*, *conditional*, and *impartial election*, againſt which *they* are unreaſonably prejudiced.

To guide the Reader in the peruſal of this two-fold Eſſay, I have prefixed to every page of the *firſt part* theſe words, *Bible-Calviniſm*. By this title the *rigid Arminians* are to be guided in reading the vindication of that half of the goſpel, which they frequently overlook. And theſe words, *Bible-Arminianiſm* are placed at the top of every page of the *ſecond part* of the Eſſay, in order to direct the *rigid Calviniſts* to that half of the goſpel, which they generally neglect.

Each

Each part may be read by itſelf, which will be done without difficulty by attending to the above-mentioned titles or directions at the top of the page. The two parts are placed oppoſite to each other for the following reaſons: (1) To ſhew their dependence on the oppoſite propoſitions which fill the preceding ſection: (2) To give the reader a better opportunity of comparing them, and weighing them in the balances of the ſanctuary: (3) To demonſtrate that *Bible-Calviniſm* and *Bible-Arminianiſm*, or [if you pleaſe] *the doctrines of grace* and *juſtice* form together the *full* goſpel of Chriſt, as the two ſides of a face form together a *full* face; or as the two ſcales, which hang oppoſite to each other, form a pair of ſcales: (4) To inſinuate that the men, who reject either the doctrines of *partial grace*, or thoſe of *impartial juſtice*, dreadfully mangle the goſpel, and [like the falſe mother, whoſe wicked pretenſion was detected by Solomon's wiſdom] deſtroy *the child* they claim and would have cut in two: I mean *Chriſt doctrinal,—the holy child Jeſus*, who calls himſelf, *The Truth*. And laſtly: To put the reader into a method of trying doctrines by the two goſpel-axioms; the *firſt* Eſſay evidently depending on the *former* of thoſe axioms; and the *ſecond* Eſſay having a manifeſt reference to the *latter*.

Bible-Arminianiſm and Bible-Calviniſm:

A TWO-FOLD

ESSAY,

PART THE FIRST,

DISPLAYING THE DOCTRINES OF

PARTIAL GRACE,

PART THE SECOND,

Thoſe of IMPARTIAL JUSTICE.

BIBLE-CALVINISM.

ESSAY THE FIRST.

Displaying *the Doctrines of partial Grace,—the capital error of the Pelagians,—and the excellence of Scripture Calvinism.*

THE Doctrines of *partial Grace* rest on these scriptures, *I will be* [peculiarly] *gracious to whom I will be* [peculiarly] *gracious; and I will shew* [special] *mercy, on whom I will shew* [special] *mercy*, Ex. xxxiii. 19. *Is it not lawful for me, to do what I will with mine own?* Matt. xx. 15.

These precious doctrines subdivide themselves into a *partial Election*, and a *partial Reprobation*; both flowing from a free, wise, and sovereign *grace*, which is notoriously *respective* of persons.

The partial election and reprobation of free-grace is the gracious and wise *choice*, which God [as a sovereign and arbitrary *benefactor*] *makes, or refuses to make*, of *some* persons, churches, cities and nations, to bestow upon them, for

BIBLE-ARMINIANISM.

ESSAY THE SECOND.

Displaying *the Doctrines of impartial Juſtice, the capital error of the Calvinists, and the excellence of Scripture-Arminianism.*

THE Doctrines of *impartial Juſtice* reſt on theſe ſcriptures, *I ſay unto you, that to every one who hath* [to purpoſe,] *more ſhall be given: and from him* [the ſlothful ſervant] *who hath not* [to purpoſe,] *even that he hath, ſhall be taken away from him*, Luke xix. 26.—*Curſed is he that perverteth judgment*, Deut. xxvii. 19.

Theſe awful doctrines ſubdivide themſelves into an *impartial Election*, and an *impartial Reprobation*; both flowing from divine *Juſtice*; which is always *irreſpective* of perſons.

The impartial election and reprobation of *Juſtice*, is the righteous and wiſe choice, which God [as an equitable and unbribed Judge] makes, or refuſes to make of ſome perſons, churches, cities and nations, judicially to beſtow upon them, [for Chriſt's ſake] gracious

rewards

for his own mercy's ſake, *more favours* than he does upon *others*.—It is the partiality, with which he imparts his talents of nature, providence, and grace, to his creatures or ſervants; giving *five* talents to ſome, *two* talents to others, and *one* to others; not only without reſpect to their works, or acquired worthineſs of any ſort; but frequently in oppoſition to all perſonal demerit; witneſs the thieves between whom our Lord was crucified, who were the only dying men, that providence ever bleſſed with the invaluable talents or gracious opportunities of the company and audible prayers of their dying Saviour. From this doctrine of election it follows, that, when God *freely elects* a man to the receiving of *one* talent *only* he *freely reprobates* him with reſpect to the receiving of *two*, or *five* talents.

According to *this* election, altho' God never leaves himſelf without the witneſs of ſome favour, by which the baſeſt and vileſt of men, who have not yet ſinned out their day of ſalvation, are graciouſly diſtinguiſhed from beaſts and devils; and altho', by that means, he is really *gracious* to all; yet he is not *equally* gracious: for he gives to ſome perſons, families, churches, and nations, more power and opportunity to do and receive good, more means of grace, yea more excellent means, more time to uſe thoſe means, and more energy of the ſpirit in the uſe of them, than he gives to other perſons, families, churches, and nations. With reſpect to the *election of grace* therefore, there is great *partiality* in God, and ſo far is this partiality from being in any degree cauſed by any natural or evangelical worth, that it is itſelf the firſt cauſe of all natural excellencies, and evangelical worthineſs. Hence it

appears,

rewards according to his evangelical promiſes; or judicially to inflict upon them, [for righteouſneſs' ſake] condign puniſhments, according to his reaſonable threatnings: ſolemn promiſes and threatnings theſe, which St. Paul ſums up in theſe words, *God, in the revelation of his righteous judgment will render to every man according to his deeds: to them, who, by patient continuance in well doing, ſeek for glory, &c.* [he will render] *eternal life. But to them that do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteouſneſs,* [he will render] *indignation and wrath: tribulation and anguiſh upon every ſoul of man that doth evil, of the jew* [and chriſtian] *firſt* [as having received more talents than others;] *and alſo of the gentile* [or heathen:] *But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the jew* [and chriſtian] *firſt* [as being God's peculiar people] *and alſo to the heathens. For* [with regard to the doctrines of juſtice] *there is no reſpect of perſons with God. For as many as have ſinned without the law* [of a peculiar covenant] *ſhall alſo periſh without the law* [of a peculiar covenant:] *And as many as have ſinned under the law* [of a peculiar covenant] *ſhall be judged by the law* [of the peculiar covenant they were under, whether it were *the law of Moſes*, or *the law of Chriſt*] *For not the hearers—but the doers of the law ſhall be juſtified in the day when God ſhall judge the ſecrets of men according to my goſpel.* And leſt ſome ſhould object, that the heathens, having neither the law of Moſes nor that of Chriſt, cannot be judged according to their works, the Apoſtle intimates that they are under the law of the human nature, which law is written upon every man's conſcience by a beam of *the true light, that enlightens*

every

appears, that the doctrine of the Pelagians [and perhaps of the *rigid* Arminians also] destroys the doctrines of partial grace; the capital error of those, who inconsiderately oppose Calvinism, consisting in denying the gracious, electing, and reprobating *partiality* of God; and in supposing, that the reasons of God's election and reprobation are always taken from ourselves; that God never elected some men in Christ, *merely after the counsel of his own* [absolute] *will*; and that the doctrine of a *gratuitous* election and reprobation, is both unscriptural and horrible.

Having thus stated *the doctrine of grace*, and the opposite error of Pelagius, I encounter that famous champion of the rigid free-willers, not with a sling and a few stones, but with the Bible and some plain quotations from it, which will establish and illustrate the *gratuitous* election and reprobation, into which the doctrine of *partial* grace is subdivided.

I have already observed in the Scripture-Scales, that *the election of* [partial] *grace* is taught in that part of the parable of the talents, where it is said, that the master chose and *called his own servants, and delivered unto them his* [not their] *goods*; [freely] *giving to one five talents, to another two, and to another one, to every one according to his several ability*, Matt. xxv. 14, 15. In this free distribution of the master's goods to the servants, we see a striking emblem of God's partiality.

Should a Pelagian deny it, and say, that God does not deal out his talents of grace with Calvinian freeness, but *according to the several abilities of his servants*, I reply by asking the following questions: (1) How came these servants to *be?* (2) How

every man that comes into the world. For, when the heathens, says he, *which have not the law, do by nature* [assisted by the general light above-mentioned] *the things contained in the* [written] *law* [of Moses or of Christ,] *these having not the* [written] *law, are a law unto themselves; and shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another,* [as a pledge and earnest of the condemnation or justification, which awaits them before the throne of justice,] Rom. ii. 5—16.

And let none say, that this is St. James's legal doctrine, into which St. Paul had slided unawares, through "the *legality* which cleaves to our nature;" for the evangelical prophet is as deep in it as the herald of free-grace. Hear Isaiah; *Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with them: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Wo to the wicked: it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him,* Is. iii. 10, 11. If Isaiah is accused of having imbibed this anti-solifidian doctrine from legal Ezekiel, I reply, that our Lord himself was as deep in it, as Ezekiel and St. James, witness his last charge: *Behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be—Blessed are they that do his commandments that they may enter into the* [heavenly] *city* [of God:] *for without are dogs, &c.* [all manner of evil-workers] *and whosoever loveth or maketh a lie,* Rev. xxii. 12.—15. The *few names in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy,* Rev. iii. 4. *Watch ye, &c. that ye may be counted worthy to escape all these things that shall*

(2) How came they to be *his* servants? And (3) How came they to have *every one his several ability?* Was this several ability acquired merely by dint of unaffisted, personal industry? If you reply in the *affirmative*, you absurdly hold that God casts all his rational creatures in the same mould, that they are all exactly alike both by nature and by grace, and that they alone *make themselves to differ*, as often as there is any difference.—If you reply in the *negative*, you give up the ground of Pelagianism, and grant that God of his rich, undeserved goodness, gives to *every one his several* [primary] *abilities* of nature and grace: and when he does this, what does he do, but display a *primary* election and reprobation of grace; seeing he distributes these natural and gracious abilities, in as distinguishing a manner as *five* are distinguished from *one*; arbitrarily reprobating *four* talents from the persons, families, churches, and nations, which he elects to *one* talent.

This scripture, *Learn not to think of men above what is written, that no one of you be puffed up: —For, who maketh thee to differ* [with respect to the first number of thy talents?] *Which* [of them] *is it that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?* 1 Cor. iv. 6, 7.—This one scripture, I say, like the stone, which sunk into Goliah's forehead, is sufficient, one would think, to bring down the gigantic error of *Pelagius*. But if that stone is not heavy enough to do the wished-for execution; I will chuse two or three more out of the book of truth, which flows from the throne of God. St. James points me to the first, *Every good gift is from above, and cometh down from the*

shall come to pass, and to stand before the son of man, Luke xxi. 36.

The *election* of justice is then nothing but the *impartiality*, with which God makes *choice* of his *good* and *faithful* servants, rather than of his wicked and slothful servants, to bestow upon them the temporal and eternal *rewards* of *goodness* and *faithfulness*, according to their works; when he *cometh and reckoneth with them*, about the talents which his free-grace hath bestowed upon them, Matt. xxv. 19. Nor is the *reprobation* of justice any thing but the impartiality with which God, as a righteous dispenser of his punishments, reprobates from his rewards of grace and glory, his wicked and unfaithful servants, who do not use, or who vilely abuse the talents, which his free-grace hath entrusted them with.

When God *commands the servants, to whom he hath given his pounds, to be called to him, that he may know how much every man has gained by trading*, in order to bestow his evangelical rewards with equity; according to the election of justice, he makes choice of the servants, who have gained something with their pounds, rather than of the servant, who has slothfully *laid up his pound in a napkin*. And according to the reprobation of justice, he reprobates from all rewards, and appoints to a deserved punishment, the unprofitable and slothful servant, rather than the faithful and diligent servants, who have improved their Lord's gifts. Once more: according to the election of justice, God elects and calls to a *double* reward his servants who have given *double* diligence to make their gratuitous election sure. Thus he elects to the honour of *being ruler over ten cities*, the man whose pound *had gained ten pounds*,

the Father of lights, James i. 17.—I am indebted for the others to our Lord's forerunner, and to our Lord himself. *John said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.* —*Jesus answered, Thou couldst have no power at all, &c. except it were given thee from above*, John iii. 27.—xix. 11.

If the Pelagian error ſtands it out againſt theſe weighty declarations, I ſhall draw *the ſword of the Spirit*, and aim at the following ſtrokes at that faſhionable and dangerous doctrine.

Why was Adam elected to the enjoyment of human powers? Was it not God's free electing love, which raiſed him to the ſphere of a *rational* animal;—that exalted ſphere, from which all other animals are reprobated? Was it not diſtinguiſhing favour, which *made him but a little lower than the angels?* Let the *Pelagians* and the *rigid Arminians* tells us, what uncreated Adam did to merit the election, which raiſed him above the firſt horſe? Or what the firſt horſe had done, to deſerve his being everlaſtingly ſhut out of heaven, and reprobated from all knowledge of his Creator? —Why was the *lark* elected to the bleſſing of a towering flight, and of ſprightly ſongs, from which the *oyſter* is ſo abundantly reprobated;—the poor oyſter, which is ſhut up between two ſhells without either legs or wings, and ſo far as we know, equally deſtitute of ears and eyes?

If a diſciple of *Pelagius* thinks, that I demean my pen by propoſing theſe queſtions, to prove the *gratuitous* and *abſolute* election and reprobation, which are ſo conſpicuous in the world of nature; I will riſe to his ſphere, and aſk him what he did to deſerve the honour of being elected

rather than the man whose pound had only gained *five* pounds, and who, by the rule of equitable proportion, is only placed over *five* cities. Luke xix. 15, &c.—And, according to the *reprobation* of justice, in the day of judgment, it shall be more intolerable for unbelieving *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida*, than for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*; and for unbelieving *London* and *Edinburgh*, than for Chorazin and Bethsaida; because they bury *more* talents, resist *brighter* light, and sin against *richer* dispensations of divine grace, Matt. x. 15.

With regard to the election and reprobation of justice, *there is* [absolutely] *no respect of persons with God:* and evangelical worthiness, which dares not shew its head before the throne of God's partial grace, may lift it up with humble confidence before the throne of Christ's remunerative justice. Hence it is, that St. Paul, who so strongly asserts in Rom. ix. that before the throne of partial grace, *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who sheweth mercy*, or favour, and in what degree he pleases; does not scruple to say, when he is going to appear before the mediatorial throne of divine justice, *The time of my departure is at hand: I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of* [evangelical] *righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day:*—when *he shall render eternal life to them, who seek for glory, by patient continuance in well-doing*, 2 Tim. iv. 6, &c. Rom. ii. 7.

The doctrines of *proper merit*, or *merit of condignity*, is unscriptural, irrational, and wild. The bare thought of it could make an *innocent* angel blush before his Creator, and should

elected to the superiority of *his* sex—an honour this, from which his mother was absolutely reprobated: and if he has a rich father, who gave him a liberal education, I should be glad to know, what good works he had done, before he was providentially elected to this blessing, from which the bulk of mankind are so eminently reprobated.

Can we not trace the footsteps of an electing or reprobating providence all the earth over, with respect to persons and places? Why is one man elected to sway a sceptre, when another is only elected to handle an ax, a spade, a file, or a brush? Why were Abraham, Job, and the rich glutton elected to a plentiful fortune, when poor Lazarus, a notorious reprobate of providence, lay starving at the door of merciless plenty? Why does a noble sot idle away his life in a *palace*, whilst an industrious sober mechanic, with all his care can hardly pay for a mean lodging in a garret? Why is one man elected to enjoy the blessings of the five senses, the advantage of a strong constitution, and the prerogative of beauty; whilst another is born blind or deaf, sickly or deformed? What have these poor creatures done to deserve this misfortune? And if God can dispense his *providential* blessings with such apparent partiality, why should it be thought strange, that he should be partial in the distribution of his *spiritual* favours? May not our heavenly benefactor have daisies and crocus', as well as tulips and roses, in the garden of his church? May he not, in the building of his temple, use plain free-stone, as well as sapphires, amethysts, and pearls? And why should we think that it is unjust in God to have moral instruments of a different

fill a *reprieved* sinner with the greatest detestation. And yet, the doctrine of *improper*, or *evangelical worthiness* is of so great importance, that if you take it away, you eclipse God's distributive justice; you destroy the law of Christ, and all the conditional promises and threatnings in the Bible; you demolish all the doctrines of personal rewards and punishments together with the judgment-seat of Christ; and upon their ruins raise an Antinomian Babel, whose dreadful foundation is *finished*, or *necessary damnation* for the myriads of Calvin's absolute reprobates; while its airy top is *finished*, or *necessary salvation* for all is absolute elect.

Hence it appears, that the mistake of heated *Calvin* is exactly contrary to that of heated *Pelagius*. Pelagianism throws down the throne of God's *partial grace*, and rigid Calvinism leaves no foundation for the throne of his *impartial justice*. The former of these modern gospels shackles God *our Benefactor:* and the latter pours infamy upon God *our Judge*. It fixes upon him the astonishing inconsistency of *finally judging* men according to their works, and yet of *finally justifying* them without any regard to their works; and by this means it indirectly gives the lie to our Lord himself, who says, that *In the day of judgment, by thy words thou shalt be justified or condemned.*

Having thus described the *impartial* election and reprobation of *justice;* for which the Calvinists substitute a *partial* election of *lawless grace* in Christ, and a *partial* reprobation of *free-wrath* in Adam; I support the doctrines of *justice* by the following appeals to scripture and matter of fact.

ferent ſhape and ſound in his grand, ſpiritual concert, when David could [without violation of any right] predeſtinate ſome of his muſicians to praiſe God with *trumpets*, *ſhawms*, and *loud cymbals*, when others were appointed to do it only upon an *harp*, a *lute*, or a *pipe?*

St. Paul compares believers, who are the members of Chriſt's myſtical body, to the various parts, which compoſe the human frame; and wiſely obſerves, that though our *uncomely parts* [the *feet* for example] are reprobated from the honour put upon the *head*, they are nevertheleſs all uſeful in their places. His illuſtration is ſtriking, and would help Pelagian levellers to ſee their miſtakes, if they would conſider it without prejudice. *Theſe are diverſities of gifts* [under all the inferior diſpenſations of God's grace, as well as under the goſpel of Chriſt, to which the Apoſtle's ſimile immediately refers]—*The manifeſtation of the ſpirit is given to every man to profit withal. For the ſpirit divides* his gifts of partial grace *to every man ſeverally as he will.*—*The body is not one member, but many. If the foot ſhall ſay, becauſe I am not the hand* [or the eye] *I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body?* Is it abſolutely reprobated from the bodily ſyſtem? On the other hand, *if the whole body were an eye, where were the ear? And if the whole were ear, where were the noſe? But now hath God ſet the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleaſed him* i. e. according to the good pleaſure, counſel, and wiſdom of his electing or reprobating will.

If the Pelagians will contend for their error on a *religious* ground, I meet them there, and aſk, What good thing did Adam to deſerve, that God ſhould

Search the Scriptures, for they bear teſtimony to the equity of God our rewarder and puniſher. If he praiſes, and rewards one man rather than another, this difference flows from the holineſs of his nature, which makes *his* [judicial] *ways equal.* He *loves righteouſneſs and hates iniquity*; and therefore he judicially *chuſes the man that is godly*, whilſt he judicially reprobates the man that is ungodly. If a veil, as thick as that which is upon the Jews, were not upon us when we read the Scriptures, would we not confeſs, that God's *judicial* reprobation impartially turns upon our not receiving the truth, and not living up to it, that is, upon our *voluntary* unbelief, and the *unneceſſitated* diſobedience which flows from it?

Does not the experience of all ages confirm this aſſertion? Which *creating* grace had gratuitouſly elected and called Adam to the enjoyment of a paradiſaical kingdom, did not *impartial*, and remunerative juſtice put the ſtamp of divine approbation upon his faith and obedience, by equitably continuing him in that kingdom, till he ſinned? And did not impartial juſtice ſeal him with the ſeal of *reprobation*, when he had ſinned? Hear the reprobating decree: *Becauſe thou haſt hearkened to the voice of thy wife, &c. curſed is the ground for thy ſake.—Therefore the Lord God ſent him forth from the garden*, Gen. iii. 17, 23.

When *redeeming* grace had reprieved him, and his poſterity: did divine approbation and reprobation calviniſtically faſten upon their children? Did not the judicial difference, which God made between Cain and Abel, ſpring merely from the perſonal faith of *Abel*, and the excellence of his ſacrifice! Hear Moſes and St. Paul: *The Lord had*

ſhould plant for him the *tree of life in the midſt of the garden*, and ſhould lay upon him no other burden for his trial, than abſtaining from eating of the fruit of one tree? Would not God have been *gracious*, if he had ſuſpended the judicial reprobation of our firſt parents, on their refuſing to abſtain from all food every other day, for a thouſand years? Who does not ſee free-grace in the appointment of ſo eaſy a term, by ſubmitting to which he might have made his gratuitous election ſure, and ſecured the remunerative election of juſtice: again: when judicial reprobation had overtaken the guilty pair, what did they do to deſerve, that the execution of the ſentence ſhould not inſtantly take place in all the fierceneſs of the threatned curſe? And how many good deeds did they muſter up, to merit the goſpel of redeeming grace—the precious promiſe that *the ſeed of the woman ſhould bruiſe the ſerpent's head?—Verily*, ſays the Apoſtle, *he* [the Redeemer] *took not on him the nature of angels: but he took on him the ſeed of* a man, viz. *Abraham*, and became *the ſon of man*, though he is *the everlaſting Father*. Is there no partiality of grace in the myſtery of the incarnation? Was it *mere* equity, which dictated that the Son of God ſhould come *in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh*, to ſave ſinful man; and not *in the likeneſs of ſinful* ſpirit, to ſave fallen angels?

But ſuppoſing [not granting] that this partiality in favour of mankind, ſprang *merely* from the peculiar excuſableneſs of their caſe; I aſk, Why did the ſons of *Cain* deſerve to be begotten of a marked murderer, who brought them up as *ſons of Belial*; whilſt the children of *Seth* were providentially

had respect to Abel and his offering: but to Cain and his offering he had not respect. For *by faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.* —Thus *the Lord had respect to* Cornelius and his charity. *His prayer and alms came up for a memorial before God:* but to the pharisees, their prayers and alms, *he had not respect:* for, *by faith* in his light, Cornelius *offered more excellent* prayers and alms than the pharisees. *By which he* [like Abel] *obtained witness that he was righteous, and accepted: God* [by the angel] *testifying of his gifts: And, by it, he, being dead, yet speaketh* to all solifidians, who would banish the election and reprobation of *justice* out of the world.

Righteous *Seth* succeeds righteous *Abel*: his children do the works of God, and are, of consequence the elect of his justice, as well as of his grace. But, as soon as these pious sons of God begin to draw back, and to follow the worldly ways of the daughters of men, they begin to rank among the reprobates of justice, and are involved in their dreadful punishment. Through the apostacy of these sons of God, *the earth was* [soon] *corrupt before God:* and yet *Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.* Therefore when a decree of judicial reprobation went forth against *the world of the ungodly*, a decree of judicial election was made in his favour: *And the Lord said to Noah, Come thou, and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation,* Gen. vii. 1. *Ham*, the father of *Canaan*, shared in the election, which saved Noah; but, by his flagrant violation of the fifth commandment, he soon brought upon himself a judicial reprobation.

A decree

videntially elected into the family of a pious man, who brought them as *sons of God?*

But if we will see the election and reprobation of partial grace, together with the glory of distinguishing predestination, shining in the greatest lustre; we must take a view of the *covenants of promise*, which God made at different times with favoured men, families, churches, and nations:—peculiar covenants, which flowed every one from a peculiar election of grace.

Was it not of free, distinguishing grace, that God called *Abraham*, and raised himself a church in a branch of his numerous family? Could he not as well have called to this honour *Abimelech* king of Gerar, *Melchisedec*, king of Salem, or *Job*, the perfect man in the land of Uz? Or could he not have said to the father of the faithful, Not in *Isaac*, but in *Ishmael*, or in the sons of Ketura, thy last wife, *shall thy* peculiarly covenanted *seed be called?*

Nay, what did Abraham do to be justified *as a sinner?* Was he not fully justified *in this sense*, merely by receiving God's *free-gift* through faith? The point is important, for it respects not only Abraham's *gratuitous* justification *as a sinner*, but also the *free* justification of every other *sinner*, who does not spurn the heavenly gift. Dwell we then a moment upon St. Paul's question, concerning Abraham's justification as a sinner. *What shall we say then? If Abraham were justified by works* [as a sinner] *he hath whereof to glory:* but not before God. For what says the scripture?*

* *With fear* of offending any of my brethren, *and with trembling*, lest I should injure any doctrine of grace, I will venture to propose here a few questions, the decision of

A decree of vindictive reprobation passes against Sodom, but the sacred historian who informs us of it, sets his pen like a bar of brass against the Calvinian doctrine of free-wrath: nay, God himself condescends to speak in our language on that awful occasion. *The Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom is great, I will go down now, and* [before I judicially reprobate it] *I will see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, and if not I will know*, Gen. xviii. 20. So far is the Lord from judicially reprobating his creatures otherwise than according to works, i. e. according to evangelical worthiness or unworthiness!

Agreeably to the same doctrine of justice, God shewed favour to *righteous* Lot, rather than to the wicked inhabitants of Sodom. For *it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham*, and his cogent plea, [" *Wilt thou* reprobate and *destroy the righteous with the wicked? That be far from thee, to do after this manner! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*"] *And* [accordingly] *God sends Lot out of the midst of the overthrow.*

His wife shared in this election of justice, for the angels *laid hold upon her hand*, and extended to her the same favour which they did to her husband; but as soon as she looked back, and broke the commandment, *Look not behind thee*; *she* forfeited her election: reprobation laid hold on her, and she became a monument of God's judicial impartiality.

Although God's distinguishing *grace* shines in his calling Abraham to be a father of his peculiar people; yet the election of *justice* soon goes hand in hand with the election of grace. How striking are these antisolifidian passages! *I will perform the oath*

ſcripture? Abraham believed God [when God freely called him to receive grace, or more grace] *and it was counted to him for righteouſneſs*, Rom. iv. 1, &c.

Now

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which I leave to the candor of thoſe, who are afraid of making one part of the ſcripture contradict the other. Granting that *a ſinner*, as ſuch, can never have any thing to *glory* in, unleſs it be his ſin, his ſhame, and condemnation, I aſk, Is there not a ſenſe, in which *a believer* may *rejoice* or *glory* in his works of faith? And may not ſuch a *rejoicing* or *glorying* be truly evangelical? What does St. Paul mean, when he ſays, *Let every* [believing] *man prove his own work, and then ſhall he have rejoicing* [or] *glorying in himſelf, and not in another?* Gal. vi. 4.—Did St. John preach ſelf-righteouſneſs, when he wrote, *Hereby* [*by loving* our neighbour *in deed and in truth*] *we ſhall aſſure our hearts before Him*, i. e. *before God. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things*, [that make for our condemnation, better than we do. *Beloved, if our heart* [or conſcience] *condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God*, [i. e. *before God.*] *And whatſoever we aſk we receive of him, becauſe we keep his commandments, and do theſe things which are pleaſing in his ſight*, 1 John iii. 19, &c.—If all ſuch glorying is phariſaical, who was, to the laſt, a greater phariſee than the great Apoſtle, who ſaid, *Our rejoicing* [or *glorying*] *is this, the teſtimony of our conſcience, that in godly ſincerity, &c. we have had our converſation in the world*, 2 Cor. i. 12.—If St. Paul was guilty for *living*, how much more for *dying*, full of *this* glorying? And is it not evident he did, from his own dying ſpeech. *I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought—I have finiſhed—I have kept—Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the righteous Judge ſhall give me at that day*, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.—Does not St. John exhort us to attain the height of the confidence, in which St. Paul died, when he ſays, *Look to yourſelves, that we loſe not thoſe things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward?* 2 John 8. Does not St. Paul repreſent ſpiritual men, as per-

oath which I ſware to Abraham thy father, &c. becauſe that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my ſtatutes, and my laws, Gen. xxvi. 3, 5. Did not God *judicially elect* that faithful patriarch to the rewards of grace, when he ſaid, *By myſelf have I ſworn; becauſe thou haſt done this thing, and haſt not with-held thine only ſon, that in bleſſing I will bleſs thee, becauſe thou haſt obeyed my voice?* Gen. xxii. 16, 18. Do not theſe ſcriptures prove, that if Abraham had not made his election of peculiar favour ſure, by *obeying God's voice*, he would have forfeited that election, as well as Saul and Judas?

But, to return to the election of *juſtice*; does not this election extend in ſome degree, even to the children of the godly? When God had ſaid to Abraham, according to the reprobation of inferior grace, *Caſt out the bond-woman, and her ſon*, Iſhmael, did he not ſay alſo, according to the election of juſtice, *For Iſhmael I have heard thee: behold, I have bleſſed him—becauſe he is thy ſeed?* Gen. xvii. 20. xxi 13 And is not the decree of this remunerative election openly written by David, where he ſays, *Bleſſed is the man that feareth the Lord. His ſeed ſhall be mighty upon the earth: the generation of the upright ſhall be bleſſed?*

A ſtriking inſtance of the impartial reprobation of *juſtice* we have in the Amorites, and Iſraelites, the two nations, to which God, according to the election of ſpecial favour, ſucceſſively gave the good land of Canaan. God's juſtice would not abſolutely reprobate the Amorites from it, till they had finned out their day of national ſalvation, or ſquandered away all the time

Now, if *Abraham believed God*, it is evident that God offered himself *first* to Abraham, that Abraham might believe in him. Therefore a *free* election, calling, and *gift* [for an *offer* from God is

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fons, who have *God's spirit bearing witness together with their spirit*, [and, vice versa, who have *their spirit*, or *conscience*, bearing witness together with God's Spirit] *that they are the children of God?* Rom. viii. 16. And is it right to abolish the office of conscience, by turning out of the world all comfortable consciousness of having done that, which is right *in the sight of God*, and by discarding all tormenting consciousness of having done the contrary; under the frivolous pretence that our Lord, in his parabolical account of the day of judgment, represents the generality of *good* and *wicked* men, as not being yet properly acquainted with this *Christian* truth, that whatever *good* or *wrong* we do to *the least* of our fellow-creatures, Christ will *reward* or *punish*, as if it were done to himself? Alas! If the generality of *Christians* do not yet properly know this important truth, which is so clearly revealed to them; is it surprising to hear our Lord intimate, that the *Jewish*, *Mahometan*, and *Heathen* world will wonder, when they shall see themselves *rewarded* or *punished*, according to that deep saying of St. Paul, *The head of every man is Christ:* whence it follows, that whatever good or evil is done to *any man*, (but more especially to *any Christian*) is done, in some sense, to *a member of Christ*, and consequently to *Christ* himself?---How deplorable is it, to see good men cover an antinomian mistake, by an appeal to a portion of scripture, which our Lord spoke to leave Antinomianism no shadow of covering!

Should it be said that the evangelical glorying, for which I plead after St. Paul, is subversive of his own doctrine, because he says, *He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord*; I answer, that we keep the gospel-precept, when we *principally* glory *in the Lord* himself, and when we *subordinately* glory in nothing, but what is *agreeable to the Lord's word*, and in the manner, and for the ends, which *the Lord* himself has appointed. When the Apostle says, *He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord*, he no more supposes,

which he had allotted them for national repentance. *I brought thee out of Ur to give thee this land*, faid God to Abraham, but thy poſterity ſhall not immediately inherit it, *for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full*, Gen. xv. 16.—And God was exactly as equitable to the corrupted Iſraelites, as he had been to the corrupted Canaanites; for he would not drive the Jews out of the land of Canaan, till they were quite ripe for that national reprobation. Hence it is, that our Lord, by nationally *ſparing* them, ſuffered them alſo to *fill up the meaſure of their iniquities*, Matt. xxiii. 32.

To return: God ſays to Abraham, *I will judge the oppreſſive nation, whom the Iſraelites ſhall ſerve*; and accordingly he judicially reprobates *Rahab and the dragon*—Egypt and Pharaoh. But is *Rahab* ſtruck with any plague, is the river turned into blood, before its waters have been mixed with the briny tears, and tinged with the innocent blood of the children of God's people? Is Pharaoh drowned in the red ſea, or hardened, before he has hardened his own heart, by ſetting his ſeal to the moſt cruel decrees, and by drowning the helpleſs poſterity of Joſeph, who had been the deliverer of his kingdom?

Proceed to the book of *Numbers*, and you ſee at large the awful account, which St. Jude and St. Paul ſums up in theſe words: *I will put you in remembrance, that the Lord having ſaved the people out of the land of Egypt* [through obedient faith] *afterward deſtroyed them that believed not* [unto the end,] Jude 5.—For *our* [elect] *fathers did all drink of the ſpiritual rock which followed them, and that rock was Chriſt. But*, [becauſe they did not all ſecure the gracious rewards

is a *gift on his part*, whether we receive what he offers or not] a *free gift*, I say, preceded Abraham's faith. His very belief of any justifying and saving truth proves, that this truth, in

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that it was wrong to *glory*, as he did, *in the testimony of a good conscience*, than he supposes, that it is wrong in a woman to be married to a *man* as well as to *Christ*, because he says, If she marrieth, let her *marry in the Lord*. Such a conclusion will be as absurd, as the following Antinomian inferences, "God *will have mercy, and not sacrifice*, and therefore we must offer him neither the *sacrifice* of our praises, nor that of our persons."—"Christ said to Satan, *The Lord thy God only shalt thou serve*; and therefore it is a species of idolatry in domestics to *serve* their masters."—May God hasten the time: when such sophistry shall no more pass for orthodoxy!

Should it be farther objected, that St. Paul says, *God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ!* Gal. vi. 14. I reply, that it is unreasonable not to give evangelical latitude to that expression; because, if it is taken in a literal and narrow sense, it absolutely excludes all glorying in Christ's *resurrection, ascension*, and *intercession*; a glorying this, which the Apostle himself indulges in Rom. viii. 34. However, that he could, in a subordinate sense, *glory* in some thing besides the *cross* of Christ, appears from his own *glorying* in his labours, sufferings, infirmities, revelations, and converts; as well as in his preaching the gospel in Achaia without being burthensome to the people. But all this subordinate glorying was *in the Lord, through whom* he did and bore all things, and *to whom* he referred all inferior honours. And therefore when he said, that *the righteous Judge* would give him *a crown of righteousness* for having *so run as to obtain it*, he, no doubt, designed to cast it at the feet of him, in whose cross he principally gloried, and whose person was his *all in all*.

"But *all* this glorying was before men, and not *before God*." So it is said: but I prove the contrary by reason and scripture: (1) By *reason*; next to the cross of Christ, what St. Paul chiefly *gloried* or *rejoiced in*, was *the testimony of his conscience*, 2 Cor. i. 12. Now I ask, Had

of juſtice, notwithſtanding their election of grace] *with many of them God was not well pleaſed, for they were overthrown in the wilderneſs* by the plague —by ſerpents—by the deſtroyer. *Now all theſe things happened to them* [the elect of diſtinguiſhing grace,] *and they are written for our admonition*, leſt we ſhould not make our election of juſtice ſure by the works of faith; *Wherefore let him that thinketh he* [ſufficiently] *ſtandeth* [by the election of partial grace] *take heed leſt he fall* [into ſin, which draws after it the reprobation of impartial juſtice,] 2 Cor. x. 1, &c.

As a proof that, with reſpect to the election of *juſtice*, God is no reſpecter of perſons, I produce *Moſes* and *Aaron*, the great prophet and the high-prieſt of the jewiſh diſpenſation. They are both elected and called to inherit the land of Canaan; but not making this calling and election ſure, they are both reprobated with reſpect to that inheritance. The adult Iſraelites ſhare their reprobation. Of ſeveral hundred thouſand, none but *Caleb* and *Joſhua* make their election to that favour ſure.

Joſhua and a new generation of Iſraelites obey; Jordan is parted: Jericho and her wicked inhabitants are deſtroyed. But *Rahab* and her friends, although they were Canaanites, are elected to partake of a peculiar deliverance, becauſe *ſhe had received the meſſengers* with hoſpitable kindneſs, James ii. 25. On the other hand *Achan*, one of thoſe who were intereſted in the covenant of peculiarity, hides the wedge of gold, and the reprobation which *Rahab's* hoſpitality had averted, lights on him for his covetouſneſs. She is bleſſed as a daughter of Abraham, and he is deſtroyed as a curſed Canaanite.

in which he believed, was *freely* offered and given him, that he might believe in it; yea, *before* he poſſibly could believe in it. To deny this is as abſurd as to deny, that God freely gives us *eyes* and *light before* we can *ſee*. Abraham therefore, who was ſo eminently juſtified by the works of faith as an obedient believer, was *initially* accepted or juſtified as a *ſinner of the Gentiles* by mere grace, and *before* he could make his calling and acceptance ſure by believing and obeying: for

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the Apoſtle this *joy* and *glorying* only when he was in company? Did he not enjoy it alſo when he was alone? If you ſay, that he had it *only* in company, you repreſent him as a vile hypocrite, who could change the teſtimony of his conſcience, as eaſily as he did his coat or company. And if you grant that he had this rejoicing when he was *alone*, you give up the point; for reaſon tells us, that all the rejoicing and glorying, which an enlightened man has in his own conſcience, when he is *alone*, muſt be *before God*; becauſe an enlightened conſcience is a court, at which none is preſent but *God*, and where *God always* preſides.

(*y*) By *Scripture*. Paul himſelf exhorts the Theſſalonians ſo to *walk* as to *pleaſe God*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 1. Now the joyous teſtimony of our conſcience that we *walk* ſo as to *pleaſe God*, muſt, in the nature of things be a teſtimony *before God*.—St. Peter repreſents our preſent *ſalvation* as conſiſting in *the anſwer of a good conſcience towards God*, that is, *before God*. 1 Pet. iii. 21.—And St. John cuts the very root of the objection, where he declares, that, by the conſciouſneſs of our love to our neighbour, *we aſſure our hearts before God*, that *if our hearts condemn us not, then we have confidence towards God*; and that if we abide in Chriſt, by walking as he alſo walked, *we ſhall have confidence, and not be aſhamed before him at his coming*, 1 John ii. 6. 28.—iii. 18, &c. How ſurprizing is it, that an objection, which is ſo contrary to *reaſon*, *ſcripture*, and the *experience* of the Apoſtles, ſhould be ſo confidently produced by Proteſtants, as if it contained the marrow of the goſpel!

After *Joshua's* death, God's chosen people corrupted themselves: and *the angel of the Lord* [the Messiah] *came and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you into the land, which I sware to your fathers: and I said, I will never break my covenant with you.* [Here is the election of grace:] *But ye have not obeyed my voice. Wherefore, I also said, I will not drive out the inhabitants of the land before you.—They forsook the Lord and served Baal. And the anger of the Lord was hot against them:—whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, as the Lord had sworn unto them,* Judges ii. 1. 15. [Here is the reprobation of justice!]

I have already mentioned how *Phineas's* zeal procured his election to the highest dignity in the church militant, and how *Eli's* remissness caused his reprobation from that dignity, and entailed degradation and wretchedness upon his family.—As for Saul, *when* he *was little in his own sight, God,* [gratuitously] *made him the head of the tribes of Israel.* But when he grew proud and disobedient, *God* [judicially] *rejected* [or reprobated] *him from being king.* In his days the *Kenite* were predestinated to be delivered from death, *because they shewed kindness to all the children of Israel, when they came up out of Egypt:* whilst the *Amalekites*, their neighbours, were appointed for utter destruction, because *they laid wait for Israel in the way, when he came up from Egypt,* 1 Sam. xv. 2. 6.

Although the Lord called *David*, rather than Jonathan, to the crown of Israel according to the election of *grace*; he nevertheless preferred *David* to his brother *Eliab* according to the election of *justice! Samuel* [says the historian] *looked on Eliab,*

for the power to believe and obey, always flows from the *firſt* degree of our acceptance, or from our free and gratuitous juſtification *as ſinners*—a *free-gift* this, which *is come upon all men to juſtification*, Rom. v. 18. though alas! moſt men refuſe it through unbelief, or throw it away through an obſtinate continuance in ſin. Abraham therefore, by receiving this *free-gift* of juſtification through faith, was *fully juſtified as a ſinner*, and went on from faith to faith, till, by receiving and embracing the *ſpecial* grace, which called him to a covenant of peculiarity, *he became the father* of all thoſe, who embrace the *ſpecial* callings and promiſes of God, under the patriarchal, Moſaic, and Chriſtian diſpenſations of divine grace.

I have ſaid that through faith Abraham was *fully juſtified as a ſinner*, becauſe our *full* juſtification as ſinners implies *two* things: (1) God's freely juſtifying us, and (2) Our freely receiving his juſtify grace: juſt as being *fully knighted* implies two things: (1) The king's condeſcending to confer the honour of knighthood upon a gentleman: and (2) That gentleman's ſubmitting to accept of this honour.

To conclude this digreſſion: the *free* and *full* juſtification of a ſinner *by faith alone*, or by a *mere receiving* of the gratuitous, juſtifying mercy of God, is a moſt comfortable, reaſonable, and ſcriptural doctrine, which St. Paul ſtrongly maintains, where he ſays, *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteouſneſs*, Rom. iv. 5. When Luther therefore held forth this glorious truth, which the church of Rome had ſo greatly obſcured, he did the

Eliab, and ſaid, Surely the Lord's anointed is before him: but the Lord ſaid, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his ſtature, becauſe I have refuſed [reprobated] *him: for the Lord ſeeth not as man ſeeth, for the Lord looketh on the heart:—to this man will I look, who is poor and of a contrite ſpirit, and trembleth at my word,* 1 Sam. xvi. 6, 7. and Iſa. lxvi. 2. And therefore, when Saul was rejected, Samuel ſaid to him, God hath choſen *A man after his own heart;—a neighbour that is better than thou,* 1 Sam. xv. 28.

Solomon loved the Lord—and ſaid to him, Thou haſt ſhewn unto my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in uprightneſs of heart, &c. and now O Lord, I am but a little child, &c. give therefore thy ſervant, an underſtanding heart—And the ſpeech pleaſed the Lord: and God ſaid to him, Becauſe thou haſt aſked this thing, and not riches, &c. Lo, I have [elected thee to receive, or *I have*] *given thee a wiſe and underſtanding heart, and I have alſo given thee,* [or elected thee to receive] *that which thou haſt not aſked, both riches and honour,* 1 Kings iii. 3. &c.—Here we ſee young Solomon, by the power of aſſiſted free-will, trading ſo wiſely with his one talent of initial wiſdom, as to increaſe in wiſdom above all his cotemporaries. And yet when he was old, and had got ten talents of wiſdom, he *hid them*, not indeed *in a napkin*, but in the lap of the ſtrange, idolatrous women whom he had collected. A demonſtration this, that man is endued with freedom of will, and that, as *free-grace* did not *neceſſitate* Solomon to chuſe wiſdom in his youth, neither did *free-wrath neceſſitate* him to chuſe folly in his old age.

To

the work of a Reformer, and of an Apoſtle. Happy would it have been for the proteſtant world, if he had *always* done it as St. Paul and St. James; and if, adding the doctrines of *juſtice* to the doctrines of *grace*, he had as impartially enforced the *judicial* juſtification of *a believer* by the *works* of faith, as the Apoſtle does in theſe words, *Not the hearers of the law* [of nature—of Moſes—or of Chriſt] *are juſt before God, but the doers ſhall be juſtified—in the day when God ſhall judge the ſecrets of men according to my goſpel*, Rom. ii. 13. 16—yea, and *in the day* when God ſhall *try* the faith of believers, that he may *juſtly* praiſe or blame them, reward or puniſh them. And how can he do this *juſtly*, without having reſpect to their own works, that is, to their *tempers*, *words* and *actions*, which are the works of their own *hearts*, *lips* and *hands*? This important doctrine, Luther ſometimes overlooked, although St. James ſtrongly guards it by theſe anti-ſolifidian words, *Was not Abraham our father juſtified by works, when he had offered Iſaac, &c? Ye ſee then how that by works a* [believing] *man is juſtified, and not by faith only*, James ii. 21, 24.

But *a ſinner*, conſidered as ſuch, can never be juſtified otherwiſe than by mere favour. Nor can St. Paul's doctrine be too ſtrongly inſiſted upon *to the praiſe of the glory of* God's *grace*, and to the honour of *the righteouſneſs of God, which is by faith of Jeſus Chriſt, unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference: for all have ſinned and come ſhort of the glory of God; being juſtified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt*, Rom. iii. 21, &c.

To return: divine mercy gently holds out her ſcepter to ſome men, whom the Calviniſts generally conſider as *abſolute* reprobates, whilſt divine juſtice awfully brandiſhes her ſword againſt other men, whom the Calviniſts conſider as *abſolute* elect. Take a proof or two of the former part of this propoſition.

Cain's countenance falls; anger the parent of murder, is conceived in his envious heart: but God addreſſes him with the gentleneſs of a father, and the mildneſs of a friend. The wretch, notwithſtanding, imbrues his hands in his brother's blood: but the goodneſs and patience of God endure yet daily, and ſecure the frighted murderer a long day of grace, by threatning a ſeven-fold puniſhment to the man that ſhould ſlay him.—Wicked *Ahab*, repents in part, and God in part reverſes the decree of his judicial reprobation. *The word of the Lord came to Elijah, ſaying, Seeſt thou how Ahab humbleth himſelf before me? I will not bring the evil in his days upon his houſe.* What is ſuch a decree as this, but a judicial reprobation, tempered by a judicial election?

Take one or two proofs of the latter part of the propoſition. David numbers the people to indulge his vanity, and God gives him the choice of three decrees of reprobation from his *ſpecial* favour. He ſins in the matter of Urias. A decree of death goes forth againſt his child, and of ſlaughter againſt his family:—Hezekiah's heart is lifted up: he looks at his wealth with ſelf-complacence, and a decree of poverty and captivity is made againſt his houſe.

What were theſe ſevere judgments, but the marks and effects of a judicial reprobation from the

&c. Here we see, that, to the complete justification of a sinner there go three things: (1) *Mercy* or *free-grace* on God's part, which mercy [together with his justice satisfied by Christ, and his faithfulness in keeping his gospel-promises,] is sometimes called *the righteousness of God.* (2) *Redemption* on the Mediator's part. And (3) *Faith* on the sinner's part. And if an interest in the *redemption that is in Jesus Christ*, namely in his meritorious incarnation, birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession, is what is commonly called *Christ's imputed righteousness*, I do not see why any christian should be offended at that *comprehensive phrase.* In this scriptural sense of it nothing can be so agreeable to the tenor of the gospel than to say: *All have sinned*, and all sinners who are received to divine favour, *are justified freely by God's grace* or mercy, *through Christ's merits and satisfaction*; or, [if you please] *through his imputed righteousness*; or, to speak in St. Paul's language, *through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.* For my part, far from finding fault with this comfortable, evangelical doctrine, I solemnly declare, that to all eternity I shall have nothing to plead for my justification as a sinner—absolutely nothing, but (1) God's free-grace in giving his only begotten son *to save sinners, of whom I am chief:* (2) Christ's meritorious life, death and intercession, which abundantly avail for the chief of sinners; and (3) The gospel-charter, which graciously offers mercy through Christ to the chief of sinners, and according to which I am *graciously* endued with a power to forsake sin by *repentance*, and to receive Christ and his salvation by *faith.* And therefore to all

eternity

the *peculiar* favour, which God had for these pious kings?

I have observed in the opposite essay, how partial grace favoured bloody *Manasseh*, in lengthening out his days of grace: but his election of *grace* did not hinder the election and reprobation of *justice* from having their free course. Take first an account of *this* reprobation. *And the Lord spake, &c. saying, Because Manasseh hath done these Abominations, &c. therefore, behold, I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem, that whosoever heareth it, both his ears shall tingle, &c.* Take next an account of Manasseh's *judicial* election. *When he was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed to him, and he heard his supplication,* [reversed in part the decree of his judicial reprobation] *and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom.—His prayer also, and how God was intreated of him, &c. behold, they are written, &c.—Amon did evil, as did Manasseh his father—but humbled not himself, as Manasseh had humbled himself,* 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12—23.

The New Testament gives us the same views of God's righteous reprobation. Judas, one of those whom the *Father* had *given to Christ,* John xvii. 12.—Judas, whom Christ himself *had chosen* or *elected,* John vi. 70.—Judas, for whom he designed one of the *twelve* brightest *thrones* in glory, Matt. xix. 28.—Judas, *by transgression fell,* and *was lost,* or to speak according to the Hebrew idiom, became a *son of perdition,* Acts i. 25. John xvii. 12. *He loved cursing more than blessing,* and it judicially *entered like oil* into his bones. The decree of reprobation, which had *prophetically* gone

eternity I muſt ſhout *Free Grace!* and make my boaſt of *imputed righteouſneſs* * And indeed

"While Jeſus' blood, through earth and ſkies,
Mercy, free, boundleſs mercy cries."

What thankful believer can help ſinging?

"Jeſus, thy blood and righteouſneſs,
My beauty are, my glorious dreſs;
'Midſt flaming worlds in theſe arrayèd,
With joy ſhall I lift up my head."

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* Some of my readers will poſſibly aſk, why I plead here for *the good ſenſe* of that much-controverted phraſe, *The imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt*, when, in my Second Check to Antinomianiſm, I have repreſented our Lord as highly diſapproving in the day of judgment; not only the plea of a *wicked* Arminian, who urges that "God is merciful, and that Chriſt died for all;" but alſo the plea of a *wicked* Solifidian, who begs to be juſtified merely by *the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt*, without any good works —I anſwer: (1) I no more deſigned to ridicule the above-ſtated doctrine of *imputed righteouſneſs*, than to expoſe the doctrine of *God's mercy*, or that of *general redemption*. And I am truly ſorry, if by not ſufficiently explaining myſelf, I have given to my readers any juſt occaſion to deſpiſe theſe precious doctrines of grace, or any one of them.—(2) I only wanted to guard againſt the abuſe of evangelical principles, and to point out the abſurd conſequences of the ſpreading opinion, that *God will juſtify us in the great day merely by Chriſt's imputed righteouſneſs, without the works of faith, or without any regard to perſonal righteouſneſs and inherent holineſs*. This tenet, which is the very ſoul of ſpeculative antinomianiſm, leaves the doctrine of juſtice neither root nor branch. At this unſcriptural notion *only*, I levelled the blow, which has given ſo much groundleſs offence to ſo many perſons, whom I honour for their piety, love for the reſemblance they bear to the holy Jeſus, and commend for their zeal in maintaining the

forth, according to God's foreſight of his crime, now goes forth *judicially*. He is his own executioner, and another fills his vacated throne.—Herod does not give glory to God. A decree of reprobation overtakes him, and worms eat him up.—Regardleſs of the ſtarving poor, the rich farmer fills his barns, and the rich glutton his belly, and a decree ſimilar to that which ſealed drunken Belſhazzar's doom is made againſt them. —*The* jewiſh *builders reject the corner ſtone*, and Chriſt ſays, *The kingdom of God ſhall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof*.—The maſter of the vineyard comes three years to ſeek fruit on his figtree: but, finding none, he judicially reprobates the barren nuiſance at laſt. And patience which ſuſpends a year the execution of the ſentence, offers to ſeal herſelf the decree of reprobation, if the tree continues barren to the end of the year of reprieve.—The wicked ſervant beats his fellow-ſervants: the fooliſh virgins provide no ſupply of oil: the uncharitable goats will not give drink to the thirſty, and therefore they all fall a righteous ſacrifice to divine juſtice. The goſpel-feaſt is provided, and *all things are now ready*. Multitudes of men are *choſen* and *called* to come to the feaſt, but their frivolous excuſes engage the king to reprobate them. Hear the decree of their judicial reprobation taken down by three ſacred writers, *I ſay unto you, none of thoſe men which were bidden* [and refuſed to come in time] *ſhall taſte of my ſupper*, Luke xiv. 24.—*The wedding is ready but they which were bidden were not worthy*, Matt. xxii. 8.—*I was grieved with that generation, and ſaid, They do always err in their heart, &c. So I ſware in my*

To return: the same grace which called *Abraham*, rather than *Terah* his father, or *Lot* his nephew;—this same distinguishing grace, I say, chose and called *Isaac* to the covenant of peculiarity, from which *Ishmael*, his elder brother, was reprobated:—a *special calling*, which had been fixed upon *before* the birth of Isaac, and therefore could no ways be procured by his obedience. In full opposition to Isaac's design, the same *distinguishing* grace called *Jacob* rather than *Esau*, to inherit the promises of the peculiar covenant made with *Abraham* and *Isaac*. *For the children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election* to merely gratuitous favours, *might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth* of arbitrary and partial grace, *the elder shall serve the younger*. Nor can it be said, that this partial preferring of *Jacob*, had its rise in God's foreseeing that *Esau* would sell his birth-right; for the above-quoted passage is flatly contrary to this notion: besides, Jacob himself, by divine appointment, transferred

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doctrines of *grace*, so far as they do it without injuring the doctrines of *godliness* and *justice*. And I am glad to have this opportunity of explaining myself, and assuring my Calvinist brethren, that I would lose a thousand lives, if I had them, rather than to asperse the blood and righteousness of my Saviour, or ridicule the Christian *covenant*, which *is ordered in all things and sure*, and on the gracious terms of which, [as well as on *the divine mercy* which fixed them, *the infinitely-meritorious obedience*, which procured them, and *the atoning blood* which seals them,] I entirely rest all my hopes of salvation in time, in the day of judgment, and to all eternity. And that this is Mr. Wesley's sentiment, as well as mine, is evident from his reconciling sermon on *imputed righteousness*.

wrath, They shall not enter into my rest, Heb. iii. 10. These decrees breathe nothing but just wrath kindled by an obstinate contempt of free-grace. From these, and the like scripture examples, it is evident, that a personal reprobation of *justice*, is an awful and true doctrine; and that a personal, Calvinian reprobation of *free-wrath* is as unscriptural, as it is cruel and absurd.

Who can read the scriptures without prejudice, and not see, that the election and reprobation of *partial favour*, yield to the election and reprobation of *impartial justice?* Although God chose and called Abraham out of distinguishing grace, did he not extend his mercy far beyond the little circle of that narrow calling and election? Did he set his love upon the father of the faithful and his posterity in such a manner, that there was nothing but *blind* mercy for the favoured seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and nothing but *fire* wrath, and *calvinian* reprobation, for all who were reprobated with respect to that election? What shall we say of conscientious *Abimelec*, venerable *Melchisedec*, patient *Job*, and his pious friends, for whom *God was intreated?*—What of *Bethuel*, Rebekah's father? What of *Asenath*, an Egyptian woman, the wife of Joseph? What of prudent *Jethro*, and his daughter, the wife of Moses? What of the submissive *Gibeonites*, whose part God so eminently took, against the children of Israel and the house of Saul? What of loving *Ruth*, a daughter of Moab? What of the inquisitive Queen of *Sheba*; and the Sidonian widow, who had charity enough to share her last morsel with Elijah, an hungry and desolate stranger? What of grateful *Naaman*, the Syrian, whom the prophet sent away in peace, when he entailed a

ferred to Joseph's youngest son the blessing, which naturally belonged to the eldest. *Joseph said to his father, Not so my father:* be not partial to my younger son. *This is the first-born, put thy right-hand upon his head:* he hath not sold his birth-right like Esau. *But his father refused and said, I know it my son. He* [Manasses] *shall be great: but truly his* [younger] *brother* [Ephraim] *shall be greater than he,* Gen. xlviii. 18, 19. A clear proof this, that the reprobation of grace is quite consistent with an election to inferior blessings.

Nor was the calling of *Moses* less *special* than that of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Was it not God's free predestinating grace, which so wonderfully preserved him in his infancy, and so remarkably ordained him in mount Horeb to be the deliverer of the Israelites, and the visible mediator of the jewish covenant? Can we help seeing some distinguishing grace in the following declaration? *I will do what thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by thy name:—I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee.*

I cannot conceive with what eyes Pelagius could read the scriptures. For my part, I see a continued vein of *distinguishing* favour running through the whole. Does the Lord want a man of peculiar endowments to finish the tabernacle? He says to Moses: *See, I have called by my name Bezaleel the son of Uri, of the tribe of Judah, and I have filled him with the Spirit of God,* Ex. xxxi. 2, 3. Does he want a captain for his people, and a man to be Moses's successor? *Caleb* himself is reprobated from that honour, and the Lord says,

curſe upon *Gehazi*, the lying Iſraelite? What of humbled *Nebuchadnezzar*, who was reſtored to his former greatneſs, in as wonderful a manner as patient *Job*, and penitent *Manaſſeh?* What of *the wiſe men*, who came from the eaſt; and the treaſurer of Queen Candace, who came from the ſouth, to worſhip in Judea? What of the importunate woman of *Canaan*, the zealous woman of *Samaria*, and the charitable *Samaritan*, who had compaſſion on the wounded man, the "poor creature," whom the elect prieſt had *reprobated*, and whom the choſen Levite had *paſſed by?*—Had God abſolutely no reſpect to their repentance, faith, and charity? Was there never a *Well done! thou good and faithful ſervant*, for any of them?—Shall *a cup of cold water*, given in Chriſt's name, have its reward; and ſhall not *the oil and wine* of the non-elect Samaritan, given in the name of *Humanity*, *Divinity*, *Mercy*, *Love*, *Truth and Righteouſneſs* [ſix of Chriſt's ſweeteſt names;] ſhall not, I ſay, that *wine and oil* have their reward? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he ſhut up his *remunerative* kindneſs in diſpleaſure? Is there nothing but vindictive free-wrath, for all that are not intereſted in the peculiar *covenants of promiſe* made with Abraham, Moſes, and *the High-Prieſt of our* [chriſtian] *profeſſion?* And nothing but flaming love for Nadab, Abihu, Korah, Dathan, Abiram, Demas, Hymeneus, Philetus, Alexander, and Diotrephes, who ſo eminently ſhared in the Jewiſh and Chriſtian covenants of peculiarity?

If you ſay with St. Paul, *All are not* [true] *Iſraelites, who are of Iſrael*, you grant what we contend for: you allow, that all are not the *elect* of God's *impartial juſtice*, who are the *elect* of his *partial*

ſays, *Take thee Joſhua ſon of Nun.* The ſame diſtinguiſhing grace manifeſts itſelf in the ſpecial calling of *Barak*, *Gideon*, *Sampſon*, *Samuel*, *Saul*, *David*, *Solomon*, *Eliſha*, *Jehu*, *Daniel*, *Cyrus*, *Nehemiah*, *Eſther*, *Eſdras*, *Judas Macchabeus*, and all the men whom the Lord, by his *ſpecial* grace and power, raiſed up to inſtruct, rule, puniſh, or deliver his people.

I have obſerved, that, in the very nature of things a *gratuitous*, and *perſonal reprobation* follows the gratuitous and perſonal election, which I contend for. Is not this aſſertion inconteſtible? Whilſt *Jacob* and the Iſraelites, *were* [peculiarly] *loved*; *were* not *Eſau*, and the Edomites, [comparatively] *hated?* When God will ſhew a *ſpecial, diſtinguiſhing* favour, can he ſhew it to *all?* Does not reaſon dictate, that if he ſhewed it to *all*, it would ceaſe to be *ſpecial* and *diſtinguiſhing?* If God had made his covenants of *peculiarity* with *all* mankind, would they not have ceaſed to be *peculiar?*

Once more: if God could, without impropriety, ſhew *more* favour to the Jews than to the Gentiles, and to the Chriſtians than to the Jews; I aſk, Why cannot he alſo, without impropriety, ſhew *more* favour to one Jew, or to one Chriſtian, than he does to another? By what argument can you prove, that it is wrong in God to do *perſonally*, what it is granted on all ſides he does *nationally?* If you can, without injuſtice, give a crown to an Engliſh beggar, while you give only ſix-pence to a poor Iriſhman; why may you not give ten ſhillings to another Engliſh beggar, ſuppoſing your generoſity prompts you to ſhew *him* that ſpecial favour? And may not God, by the rule of proportion, give *you* ten talents of grace

to

partial favour; and that finally the ſcale will turn for the retribution of eternal life or eternal death, according to the election or reprobation of *impartial juſtice*; and not according to the election of *partial grace*, and the reprobation of *free-wrath*. Who had ever a larger ſhare in the election of *partial* grace, than David? And yet, who ever maintained the election and reprobation of juſtice more ſtrongly, than he? Does he not ſtill cry to all the world, from the walls of Jeruſalem, *Verily there is a reward for the righteous* [of whatever family, tribe, or religion he be:] *doubtleſs there is a God, that judgeth the earth?* Does not every body know, that to *judge the earth* is to juſtify, or condemn, all its inhabitants according to their works? And when God finally juſtifies or condemns, what does he do but declare, that the godly *are* evangelically *worthy of walking with him in white*, and of *following him to fountains of living water*; and that the ungodly are every way worthy to *depart with the devil*, and follow him into the lake of fire?

I have obſerved, that the election of partial grace extends to cities and nations; and ſo does the reprobation of *impartial juſtice*. Take one or two remarkable inſtances of it. According to the election of diſtinguiſhing favour, God *choſe Jeruſalem to put his name there*. But when Jeruſalem ſhewed herſelf abſolutely unworthy of his judicial election, he reprobated her in righteouſneſs. Hear the awful decree: *I will make Jeruſalem heaps, and a den of dragons.*——*The houſes of Jeruſalem ſhall be defiled as Tophet*, Jer. ix. 11. xix. 13. The mild Jeſus, after a laſt effort to *gather her children, as a hen gathers her brood*,

to improve, whilſt he gives your *Chriſtian* brother only five; as well as he can beſtow five talents upon your fellow-Chriſtian, whilſt he gives a poor *Mahometan* one talent only?

Can any thing be more glaring than the partiality, which our Lord deſcribes in theſe words, *Wo unto thee, Chorazin; wo unto thee, Bethſaida: for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, ſitting in ſackcloth and aſhes?* Luke x. 13.—Who can read theſe words with a grain of candid attention, and refuſe his aſſent to the following propoſitions? (1) God was notoriouſly partial to Chorazin and Bethſaida; for he granted them *more* means of repentance, and more *powerful* means, and for a longer ſeaſon, than he did to Tyre and Sidon.—(2) If God had been as gracious to the two heatheniſh cities, as he was to the two Jewiſh towns, Tyre and Sidon *would have repented—a great while ago*—in the deepeſt and moſt ſolemn manner, *ſitting in ſackcloth and aſhes*.—And (3) The doctrine of *neceſſity*, or *irreſiſtible grace*, is unſcriptural; and the doctrines of impartial juſtice are never overthrown by the doctrines of partial grace; for, notwithſtanding God's diſtinguiſhing favour, which wrought wonders to bring Chorazin and Bethſaida to repentance, they repented not: and our Lord ſays in the next verſe, *But it ſhall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you*, who have reſiſted ſuch diſtinguiſhing grace.

For want of underſtanding the *partiality* of divine grace, and the nature of the harmleſs *reprobation*, which flows from this harmleſs partiality: ſome of God's *faithful* ſervants, who have received but *one* or *two* talents, are tempted

to

brood, with a flood of tears pronounces the final sentence of her judicial reprobation; *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets,—there shall not be left in thee one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*

The gratuitous election, and the judicial reprobation, of Jerusalem, are typical of the gratuitous election of the Israelites, and of their judicial reprobation. An account of their *gratuitous* election is set before the reader in the Essay on Scripture-Calvinism. Here follows an account of their *righteous* reprobation. *And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently to the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe all his commandments, that the Lord will set thee on high; —all these blessings shall overtake thee:—The Lord shall establish thee an holy people to himself, as he hath sworn to thee. But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken, &c. that all these curses shall overtake thee, &c. The Lord shall send upon thee cursing—until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly, because of all the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me,* Deuter. xxviii. 1—20. Again: *See, I have set before thee life and good, and death and evil, in that I command thee to love the Lord thy God, that thou mayest live.—But if thine heart turn away, &c. I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish,* Deut. xxx. 15, &c. Here are the decrees of God's *judicial* election and reprobation. According to *these* decrees, David says to his elect son, *Solomon, my son, serve the God of thy father with a willing mind.—If thou seek him, he will be found of thee: but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever. Take heed now, for the Lord hath chosen*

thee

to think themſelves abſolute reprobates; as often, at leaſt, as they compare their caſe with that of their fellow-ſervants, who have received more talents than they: whilſt others who have been indulged with peculiar favours, and have ſinned, or idled them away, conſider themſelves as peculiar favourites of heaven, upon whom God will never paſs a ſentence of judicial reprobation.—Hence ariſe the deſpairing fears of ſome believers, the preſumptuous hopes of others, and the ſpread of the miſtaken doctrines of grace. By the ſame miſtake, raſh Preachers frequently ſet up God's peculiar grants to ſome of his upper ſervants as a general ſtandard for all the claſſes of them, and paſs a reprobating ſentence upon every one, who does not yet come up to this ſtandard; to the great offence of the judicious, to the grief of many ſincere ſouls, whom God would not have thus grieved, and to the countenancing of Calvinian reprobation.

A plain appeal to matter of fact, will throw light upon all the preceding remarks. Are not many true Chriſtians evidently reprobated, with reſpect to ſome of the *ſpecial* favours, which our Lord conferred on the woman of Samaria, Zaccheus, Levi [afterwards St. Matthew] and St. Paul? How few have been called in ſo extraordinary, abrupt, and cogent a manner as they were? Nay, how many ſtrumpets, extortioners, buſy worldlings, and perſecutors in all ages, have been hurried into eternity, without having received the ſpecial favours, from which we date the converſion of thoſe four favourites of Free-grace?

Has not God in all ages ſhewn the *partiality* of his grace, by giving more of it to one man, than

thee to build an houſe, &c. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. According to *theſe decrees, Becauſe of all the provocations, &c. the Lord ſaid, I will remove Judah alſo out of my ſight, as I have removed Iſrael, and I will caſt off this city Jeruſalem, which I have choſen, and the houſe, of which I ſaid, My name ſhall be there,* 2 Kings xxiii. 26, 27.

It is only to defend the election and reprobation of *juſtice,* that Paul ſays, *God hath not caſt away his* [believing, obedient] *people whom he foreknew,* i. e. *fore-approved* [as believing and obedient:] for, as there were *ſeven thouſand* believing and obedient Jews, upon whom impartial juſtice ſmiled in the days of Jezebel, under *the Jewiſh election of* partial *grace; even ſo at this preſent time,* adds the Apoſtle, *there is a remnant* of ſuch Jews under *the chriſtian election of* partial *grace:* that is, A number of Jews make their chriſtian election ſure, not by the works of the Moſaic law, but by obedient faith in Chriſt. And even theſe obedient believers [in conjunction with the converted Gentiles] the Apoſtle keeps in their duty by threatening them with reprobation of impartial juſtice. *Becauſe of unbelief* [ſays he] *they* [the unbelieving Jews] *were broken off* [i. e. judicially reprobated,] *and thou* [Chriſtian believer] *ſtandeſt by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear. For if God ſpared not the natural branches;* [ſo inflexible is his juſtice!] *take heed leſt he alſo ſpare not thee. Behold therefore the goodneſs, and ſeverity of God: on them that fell* [the Jews elected through diſtinguiſhing grace] *ſeverity: but towards thee* [a chriſtian elected by diſtinguiſhing favour] *goodneſs, if thou continue in his goodneſs* [by continuing in the faith of Chriſt:] *otherwiſe thou ſhalt alſo be cut off* [notwithſtanding thy chriſtian

than to another?—to perſecuting *Saul*, for example, than to thouſands of other ſincere perſecutors, who thought, as well as he, that they *did God ſervice* in dragging his ſaints to priſon and to death? Did not the Lord ſhew leſs diſtinguiſhing mercy to *Zimri* and *Coſbi*, than to *David* and *Bathſheba?* Leſs to *Onan*, than to the inceſtuous Corinthian, and the woman caught in adultery?—Leſs to the forty-two children, who mocked the bald prophet, than to the more guilty ſons of Jacob, who went about to kill their pious brother, ſold him into Egypt, and covered their cruelty with hypocriſy and lies?—Did he not give leſs time to repent to drunken *Belſhazzar*, than he did to proud *Nebuchadnezzar?*—Did he not hurry *Ananias* and *Sapphira* into eternity with a ſeverity, which he did not diſplay towards *Cain*, *Solomon*, *Peter*, and *Judas?*—Did he ſhow as much long-ſuffering to *Eli* and his ſons, or to king *Saul* and his unfortunate family; as he did to *David* and his ungodly houſe?—Was he as gracious to the man, who gathered ſticks on the Sabbath, or to him who conveyed the Babyloniſh garment into his tent, as he was to *Gehazi*, and to king *Ahab*, whom he ſpared for years after the commiſſion of more atrocious crimes? Did not Chriſt ſhew leſs diſtinguiſhing love to *Zebedee*, than to his ſons?—Leſs to the woman of Canaan, than to *Mary Magdalen?*—Leſs to *Jude*, *Bartholomew*, and *Lebbeus*, than to *Peter*, *James*, and *John?* How ſoon, how awfully did God deſtroy *Nadab* and *Abihu*, for offering ſtrange fire? *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, for reſiſting *Moſes?*—*Uzza*, for touching the ark? And the prophet of Judah, for eating bread in Bethel; when nevertheleſs he bore for months or years with the wickedneſs

election of diſtinguiſhing grace.] *And they* [notwithſtanding their preſent reprobation of juſtice, which is occaſioned by their unbelief] *if they abide not ſtill in unbelief, ſhall be grafted in:* that is, if they make their chriſtian calling and election of grace ſure by the obedience of faith, they ſhall be numbered among the rewardable elect—the elect that do not periſh—the elect of *juſtice*, as well as of *grace*, Rom. xi. 1—23.

The Apoſtle frequently ſpeaks the ſame anti-calvinian language: take one or two more inſtances of it. *The end of thoſe things is death* [i. e. final reprobation from life.] *But, &c. ye have your fruit unto holineſs, and the end* [of this fruit is a judicial election to] *everlaſting life: for the wages of ſin is death* [i. e. a judicial reprobation from life] *but the gift of God is eternal life through Jeſus Chriſt:*—an invaluable gift, which the Redeemer has procured, and which ſhall be *judicially* beſtowed upon obedient, perſevering believers, as the king's purſes and plates, which are the *mere gifts* of his majeſty, are equitably beſtowed upon them that ſo run as to obtain the prize. And therefore, *So run*, ſays the Apoſtle, *that ye may obtain an incorruptible crown.*—Be ye followers of me:—*I ſo run, &c. leſt I myſelf ſhould be caſt away*, according to the reprobation of *juſtice*, 1 Cor. ix. 24, &c.

The election and reprobation of *partial grace* depend entirely upon the wiſdom, and ſovereignty of God The great *Potter hath power over the clay, to make of the ſame lump veſſels to honour, or to* comparative *diſhonour*, juſt as he pleaſes. As a ſupreme benefactor, he had a right to raiſe the *Jews* above all nations, by calling them at the third hour into his encloſed vineyard. He could

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wickedneſs of *Pharoah*, the idolatry of *Solomon*, the witchcrafts of bloody *Manaſſes*, and the hypocriſy of envious *Caiaphas?* Is not this *unequal* dealing of divine patience, too glaring to be denied by any unprejudiced perſon?

Does not this partiality extend itſelf even to places, and cities? Why did God reprobate *Jericho*, and elect *Jeruſalem?—Jeruſalem, the city which the Lord did chuſe out of all the tribes of Iſrael to put his name there?* 1 Kings xiv. 21. Do we read leſs than nineteen times this partial ſentence, [*The place which the Lord ſhall chooſe*] *only* in the book of Deuteronomy? Could not God have choſen *Babylon*, *Bethlehem*, or *Bethel*, as well as the city of the Jebuſites? Why did he make *mount Zion* his *holy hill?* Why did he *love the gates of Zion, more than all the dwellings of Jacob?* Is there neither election, nor reprobation in theſe words of the Pſalmiſt? *Moreover he* [the Lord] *refuſed* [reprobated] *the tabernacle of Joſeph, and choſe not* [paſſed by] *the tribe of Ephraim: but choſe the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion, which he loved*, Pſalm lxxviii. 67, 68. Again: Why did the angel, who troubled the pool of *Bethesda*, paſs by all the other pools in Jeruſalem? Why did our Lord ſend the lepers to the pool of Siloam, rather than to any other? And why were *Abana* and *Pharphar* the rivers of Damaſcus, reprobated with reſpect to the power of healing Naaman's leproſy, when *Jordan* was elected to it? Was it not becauſe God would convince the Syrians of his *partiality* to his peculiar people, and to their country?

But is this partiality confined to *Judea* and *Syria?* Or to *Egypt* and *Goſhen?* May we not ſee the footſteps of an electing, partial providence

without injuſtice, call the *Corinthians* at the ſixth hour, and the *Engliſh* at the ninth hour. And if he calls the *Hottentots* at the eleventh hour, they ſhall be entitled to the bleſſings of the richeſt election of grace [which are repreſented by the *penny* of the parable] as much as if they had been called as early as Abraham was, and had borne the burden and heat of the day as long as Paul and Cranmer did. I repeat it, with reſpect to the privileges of *the covenants of promiſe* made with the Jews and the Chriſtians, which privileges our Lord ſometimes calls his *pence*, and ſometimes his *talents*; they are ours as ſoon as we are called, if we do but anſwer the call by going into the Lord's vineyard or field. This is what Chriſt condeſcends to call *our hire* for going into his church militant—*our hire* beſtowed according to the election of *prevenient grace* But our eternal reward ſhall be given according to a very different rule, namely according to the election of *impartial juſtice*. To ſecure *this* reward, we muſt not only go into the Lord's field, when we are called: but we muſt *ſow* as we are directed. *Be not deceived*, ſays the Apoſtle when he ſtands up for the doctrines of *juſtice*; as God does not *neceſſitate* man by Calvinian decrees of finiſhed reprobation, and then mock him by Arminian offers of ſalvation: ſo *he is not mocked: for whatſoever a man ſoweth, that ſhall he alſo reap. For he that ſoweth to his fleſh, ſhall of the fleſh* [naturally and judicially] *reap corruption* and *deſtruction:* [the word has this double meaning in the original.] *But he that ſoweth to the ſpirit, ſhall of the ſpirit reap life everlaſting*, both by natural and judicial conſequence.—*For the* [moral] *earth, which bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dreſſed, receiveth bleſſing*

dence in this favoured Island? Why is it a temperate country? Could not God have placed it under the heaps of snow, which cover *Ireland*; or in the hot climates, where the vertical sun darts his insufferable beams upon barren sands? Could he not have suffered it to be enslaved by the Turks, as the once famous isle of *Crete* now is? and to lie in popish darkness as *Sicily* does; or in heathenish* superstition, as the large islands of *Madagascar* and *Borneo* do?

Who does not see the partiality of sovereign grace in the sparing of some nations, cities, and churches? Did not God reprobate the disobedient *Amalekites* sooner than the disobedient *Jews*? Why are the former utterly destroyed, when the latter are yet so wonderfully preserved? Did not God bear less with *Ai*, *Nineveh*, and *Carthage*, than with *London*, *Paris*, and *Rome*? —Less with the ten tribes, which formed the kingdom of *Israel*, than with the two tribes, which

* Mr. Addison gives us this just view of our gratuitous election in one of the *Spectators*. I shall transcribe the words of that judicious and pious writer. "The sublimest truths, which among the heathens only here and there one of brighter parts, and more leisure than ordinary, could attain to, are now grown familiar to the meanest inhabitants of these nations. Whence came this surprising change, that regions formerly inhabited by ignorant and savage people, should now outshine ancient Greece in the most elevated notions of theology and morality? Is it the effect of our own parts and industry? Have our common mechanics more refined understandings than the ancient philosophers? Is it owing to the God of truth, who came down from heaven, and condescended to be himself our teacher. It is as we are christians, that we possess more excellent and divine truths than the rest of mankind."

from God: [Come ye bleſſed, inherit the kingdom, &c. for I was hungry, and ye gave me meat.] But that which beareth thorns and briars, is rejected [reprobated] *and is nigh unto curſing, whoſe end is to be burned*, according to the fearful ſentence, *Depart, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, for I was hungry and ye gave me no meat, &c* Gal. vi. 7. Heb. vi. 7. Matt. xxv. 34, &c.

Well then might our Lord and St. Paul charge us to *eſcape* the reprobation, and to *ſecure* the election of *juſtice*. How awful and anti-calvinian are their directions! *Watch and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to eſcape all theſe* [terrible] *things, and to ſtand* [rewardable] *before the Son of man*, Luke xxi. 36.—*Whatſoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord; knowing that of the Lord ye ſhall receive the reward of the inheritance*, Col. iii. 24.

From theſe, and a multitude of ſuch ſcriptures, it appears, that when the rigid *Calviniſts* overlook the *impartial* election and reprobation of *diſtributive juſtice*, they betray as much prejudice as the rigid *Arminians* do, when they deny the *partial* election and reprobation of *diſtinguiſhing grace*. There is, however, ſome difference between the extenſiveneſs of their errors. If rigid Arminianiſm rejects the *partial* election and reprobation of *diſtinguiſhing grace*, it ſtrenuouſly maintains the *righteous* election and reprobation of *impartial juſtice*; and by this means, it preſerves one half of the doctrines of the Bible in all their purity, namely the doctrines of *juſtice*. But rigid downright Calviniſm equally ſpoils the doctrines of *grace*, and the doctrines of *juſtice*: for it turns the holy doctrines of *ſpecial grace*, into ſolifidian doctrines of lawleſs grace: and with

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which formed the kingdom of *Judah?*—Why does the Lord bear longer with the church of *Rome*, than he did with the churches of *Laodicea* and *Conſtantinople?* Is it merely becauſe the church of *Rome* is leſs corrupted?—Nay, why does he bear ſo long with *this preſent evil world*, when [comparatively ſpeaking he deſtroyed the antediluvian world ſo ſoon? And why are the Europeans, in general, elected to the bleſſings of chriſtianity, from which the reſt of the world is generally reprobated; moſt nations in Aſia, Africa, and America being indulged with no higher religious advantages, than thoſe, which belong to the religions of Confucius, Mahomet, or uncultivated nature?

If God's partiality in our favour is ſo glaring, why do not all our goſpel-miniſters try to affect us with a due ſenſe of it? May I venture to offer a reaſon of this neglect? As the ſins forbidden in the ſeventh commandment, by their odious nature frequently reflect a kind of unjuſt ſhame upon a pure marriage-bed, which, according to God's own declaration, is truly honourable; ſo the wanton election, and horrid reprobation, that form the modern doctrines of grace, have I fear, poured an undeſerved diſgrace upon the *pure election*, and the *wiſe reprobation*, which the ſcriptures maintain. Hence it is, that even judicious divines avoid touching upon theſe capital doctrines in public, leſt minds defiled with antinomianiſm ſhould ſubſtitute their own unholy notions of election, for the holy notions, which the ſcriptures convey. This evil ſhame is a remain of Pelagianiſm, or of falſe wiſdom. The abuſe of God's favours ought not to make us renounce the right uſe of them. Far then from being

respect to the doctrines of *impartial justice*, it totally demolishes them, by allowing but of *one* eternal, absolute, partial, and personal *election*, which necessarily binds Christ's righteousness and finished salvation upon some men;—and of *one* eternal, absolute, partial, and personal *reprobation*, which necessarily fastens Adam's unrighteousness, with finished damnation upon all the rest of mankind. Now, according to these doctrines of partial grace and free wrath, it is evident, that *justice* can no more be concerned in justifying or condemning, rewarding or punishing, men under such circumstances, than you could be equitably concerned in *crowning* some men *for swimming*, and in *burning* others *for sinking*; supposing you had, first, bound the elected *swimmers* fast to an immense piece of cork, and tied a huge millstone about the neck of the *sinking* reprobates. Hence it appears, that although a Bible-christian may hold Pelagius's election and reprobation of *justice*, he can neither hold Calvin's one election of *lawless grace*, nor his one reprobation of *free-wrath*.

But, whilst I bear my plain testimony against rigid Calvinism, I beg the reader to make a difference between that system, and the good men who have embraced it. With joy I acknowledge, that many Calvinist-ministers have done much good in their generation. But whatever good they have done, was not done by their errors, but by the gospel-truths, which they inconsistently mixed with these errors, and by God's over-ruling their mistakes. The doctrines of *distributive justice* belong no more to rigid Calvinism, than to Nero's private system of policy: but as good magistrates, even under Nero's authority,

being wife above what is written, let us with the prophets of old make a peculiar ufe of the doctrine of *partial* grace, to ftir up ourfelves and others to fuitable gratitude. How powerful is the following argument of Mofes? *The Lord thy God hath chofen thee, to be a fpecial people to himfelf, above all people, that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord thy God did not fet his love upon thee nor chufe thee, becaufe ye were more in number than any people, (for ye were the feweft of all people) but becaufe the Lord loved you, &c.—He had a delight in thy Fathers to love them, and chofe their feed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day, &c. He is thy praife, and he is thy God, who hath done for thee thefe great and wonderful things*, Deut. vii. 6, &c. x. 15, 21.—*For what nation is there fo great, who hath God fo nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things, which we call upon him for? Afk now of the days, that are paft;—afk from the one fide of heaven to the other, whether there hath been any fuch thing, as this great thing is. Did ever people hear the voice of God fpeaking out of the midft of the fire, as thou haft heard? Or hath God aflayed to take him a nation from the midft of another nation, by figns and wonders, &c? Unto thee it was fhewed, that thou mighteft know* [with peculiar certainty] *that the Lord he is God?* Deut. vi. 7, 32, &c.

Does not the Pfalmift ftir up the Lord's chofen nation to gratitude and praife, by the fame motive, of which the anti Calvinifts are afhamed? *He fheweth his word to Jacob, his ftatutes to Ifrael. He hath not dealt fo with any nation: as for his* [peculiarly-covenanted] *judgments, they*

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authority, ſteadily puniſhed vice, and rewarded virtue; ſo good men who have the misfortune to be involved in rigid Calviniſm, inconſiſtently deter men from ſin, by preaching the terrors of a ſin-avenging God, and by pointing out the rewards of grace and glory, which await the faithful. Add to this, that by ſtill holding out *the law of God* to the unawakened, though that kind of preaching is *abſurd* upon their ſyſtem, yet they do good, becauſe, ſo far, they preach *the doctrines of juſtice*. And by preaching a "*rule of life*" to believers, they now and then meet with profeſſors ingenuous enough to follow that *rule*. For, as there are even in Billingſgate perſons cleanly enough to waſh their hands, although their neighbours ſhould conſtantly aſſure them, that they can never get one ſpeck of dirt off;—that the king muſt do it all away himſelf, in the day of his power;—that, in the mean time, his majeſty ſees no dirt upon their hands, becauſe he looks at them only thro' the hands of the prince of Wales, which are as white as ſnow, and the cleanneſs of which his majeſty is pleaſed to impute to their dirty hands—And beſides, that dirt will work for their good—will diſplay the ſtrength of their conſtitution—will ſet off by and by the cleanſing virtue of ſoap and water—and will make dirty people ſing louder at court, when the king's irreſiſtible power and their own deadly ſweats ſhall have cleanſed their hands—As there are cleanly perſons, I ſay, who would waſh their hands notwithſtanding ſuch dirty hints as theſe: ſo there are ſome ſincere ſouls among every denomination of Chriſtians, who hate ſin, and depart from it, notwithſtanding all that ſome miſtaken theologiſts may ſay, to make them continue

[the heathen] *have not known them. Praiſe ye the Lord,—O ye ſeed of Abraham—ye children of Jacob his choſen*, Pſal. cxlvii. 19, 20.—cv. 6.

Nay, does not God himſelf ſtir up Jeruſalem [the holy city become an harlot] to repentance and faithfulneſs, by dwelling upon the greatneſs of his *diſtinguiſhing* love towards her? How ſtrong is this expoſtulation! How richly deſcriptive of God's partiality towards that faithleſs city! *Thus ſays the Lord God to Jeruſalem, Thy birth, and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan. Thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite.—Thou waſt caſt out in the open field, to the loathing of thy perſon, in the day that thou waſt born; and when I paſſed by thee, and ſaw thee polluted in thy blood, I ſaid to thee, Live.—I entered into a covenant with thee:—I put a beautiful crown upon thy head: thou didſt proſper into a kingdom, and thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty, for it was perfect through my comelineſs, which I had put upon thee, ſaith the Lord.* Ezek. xvi. 3, &c. If this could be ſaid to *jewiſh* Jeruſalem, how much more to *proteſtant* London?

Should rigid Arminians ſtill aſſert, that there is abſolutely no reſpect of places and perſons with God; I deſire the oppoſers of God's gracious partiality to anſwer the following queſtions: Why did *not the Spirit ſuffer Paul to go into Bithynia*, when *he aſſayed* to do it? Why did a viſion direct him to go into *Macedonia?* Does it appear from the cruel reception, which he met with at *Philippi*, that the people of that place were *worthy* of the goſpel above all people? Could the people of *Babylon* have ſhewed more averſion to the truth? And could not God have raiſed himſelf a chriſtian church in *Bithynia*, as well as

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tinue in sin, that the graces of humility and of faith in the atoning blood, may be abundantly exercised.

Again: The rigid Arminians are greatly deficient in exalting God's *partial grace*, and the rich election which flows to Christian believers from *this* grace. Now when the Calvinists preach to Christians a *gratuitous* election of *distinguishing* grace, though they do not preach it aright, yet they say many things which border upon the truth, and by which God *sometimes* raises the gratitude and comforts of some of his people; over-ruling Calvin's mistakes to their consolation, as he over-ruled to our comfort the high-priest's dreadful sentence, *Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people.* Never did a prophet preach the atonement more clearly than *Caiaphas* does in these words. Just so do pious Calvinists preach the election of grace, and in the same manner is their preaching over-ruled to the comfort of some.

But alas! if this confused method of preaching election is indirectly helpful to a few, is it not directly pernicious to multitudes, whom it tempts to rise to the presumption of "Mr. *Fulsome*" or to sink to the despair of *Francis Spira*? Besides, would not doubting christians be sufficiently cheated by the scriptural doctrine of our election, as it is held forth in the Essay on Scripture-Calvinism? Are those liquors best, which are made strong and heady by intoxicating and poisonous ingredients? Cannot the doctrine of our *gratuitous election in Christ* be comfortable, unless it be adulterated with Antinomianism, Fatalism, Manicheism, and a reprobation, which *necessarily* drags most of our friends and neigh-

in *Macedonia*, by ſhaking the foundation of the houſes there, in defence of Paul's innocence?

When the Apoſtle ſays, *The time of* [heatheniſh] *ignorance God winked at, but now* [explicitly] *commandeth* [by his evangeliſts] *all men, every where, to repent*, Acts xvii. 30. does he not repreſent God as being *partial* to all thoſe men, to whom he ſends Apoſtles, or meſſengers, on purpoſe to bid them repent? And does not the Lord ſhew us more *diſtinguiſhing* love, than he did to *all the nations*, which *he ſuffered to walk in their own ways*,—*without* the goſpel of *Chriſt*, *aliens from the common-wealth of Iſrael*, and *ſtrangers to the covenants of promiſe, having no hope* [founded upon a goſpel-meſſage,] *and no* [peculiarly-revealed] *God in the world?* Acts xiv. 16. Eph. ii. 12.

Again: When St. Paul obſerves, that *God ſpake in time paſt to the fathers by the prophets; but hath, in theſe laſt days, ſpoken to us by his Son*, Heb. i. 1, 2. is it not evident, that he pleads for the partiality of diſtinguiſhing grace; intimating, that God has favoured *us* more than he did *the fathers?* And has not our Lord ſtrongly aſſerted the ſame thing, where he ſays, *Bleſſed are your eyes, for they ſee; and your ears, for they hear: for verily I ſay unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have deſired to ſee thoſe things which ye ſee, and have not ſeen them; and to hear thoſe things which ye hear, and have not heard them?* Matt. xiii. 16, 17.

Once more: What is the goſpel of *Chriſt*, from firſt to laſt, but a glorious bleſſing flowing from diſtinguiſhing grace;—a bleſſing from which all mankind were reprobated for 4000 years, and from which the generality of men are to this day

cut

bours into the bottomleſs pit? And might we not ſo preach our *judicial* election by Chriſt, and ſo point out the greatneſs of the helps, which the goſpel affords us to make this election ſure, as to excite the careleſs to diligence without driving them upon the fatal rocks, by which the ſolifidian babel is ſurrounded.

From the preceding remarks it follows, that the error of *rigid Calvaniſts* centers in the denial of that *evangelical liberty*, whereby all men, under various diſpenſations of grace, may, *without neceſſity*, chuſe life in the day of their initial ſalvation. And the error of *rigid Arminians* conſiſt in not paying a cheerful homage to *redeeming grace*, for all the liberty and power which we have to chuſe life, and to work righteouſneſs ſince the fall. Did the followers of *Calvin* ſee the neceſſary connexion there is, between the *freedom of our will*, and the *diſtributive juſtice* of God our *Judge*, they would inſtantly renounce the errors of *calvinian neceſſity*, and *rigid bound-will*. And did the rigid followers of Arminius diſcover the inſeparable union there is, ſince the fall, between our *free-agency to good*, and the *free, redeeming grace* of God our *Saviour*, they would readily give up the errors of phariſaical *ſelf-ſufficiency*, and *rigid free-will*.

To avoid equally theſe two extremes, we need only follow the ſcripture-doctrine of *free-will reſtored* and *aſſiſted* by *free-grace*. According to this doctrine, in order to repent, believe, or obey, we ſtand in need of a talent of power *to will and to do*. *God, of his good pleaſure*, gives us this talent for Chriſt's ſake: and our liberty conſiſts in *not* being *neceſſitated* to make a good or bad uſe of this talent, to the end of our life.

cut off by awful, providential decrees? When the Pelagians, and rigid Arminians, therefore, are ashamed to shout the partiality of God's free, distinguishing grace towards us [christians,] are they not *ashamed of the gospel of Christ*, and to the election of peculiar grace, by which we are raised so far above the dispensations of the jews and heathens:—a precious and exalted election, or predestination, in which St. Paul, and the primitive Christians could never sufficiently glory, [as appears by Eph. i. 2, 3.] and of which it is almost as wicked to be ashamed, as it is to be ashamed of Christ himself. Nay, to slight our *election of grace*—our *election in Christ*, is to be ashamed of our evangelical *crown*, which is more inexcusable, than to blush at our evangelical *cross*.

Hence it appears, that the genuine tendency of Pelagius's error, towards which *rigid* Arminians lean too much, is to make us [Christians] fight against God's distinguishing love to *us*; or, at least, to hide from us *the riches of the* [peculiar] *grace, wherein God hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in himself, when he predestinated us, according to the counsel of his grace, and the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his* [peculiar] *grace, wherein he made us accepted in the beloved*, [and his dispensation] *that we should be to the praise of his glory*: i. e. that *we* [christians] should *shew forth the praises* of his distinguishing mercy, and glorify him for bestowing upon *us* those evangelical favours, from which he still reprobates so many myriads of our fellow-creatures.

O *Pela-*

But we must remember, that, as this precious talent comes *entirely* from redeeming grace, so the *right* use of it is *first* of redeeming grace, and *next* of our own *unnecessitated* [though assisted] free-will: whereas the *wrong* use of it is of our own choice *only*;—an *unnecessitated* choice, which constitutes us legally *punishable*, as our right, *unnecessitated* choice of offered life (through God's gracious appointment) constitutes us evangelically *rewardable*.

Hence it follows, that our accepted time, or day of salvation begun, has but one cause, namely the mercy of God in Christ: whereas our continued and eternal salvation has two causes. The *first* of which is a *primary* and *proper* cause, namely, *The mercy of God in Christ*: the *second* is a *secondary* or *improper* cause, or, if you please, a *condition*, namely, *The works of faith*. Nor do some Calvinists scruple, any more than we, to call these works a *cause*, improperly speaking. Only like physicians, who write their prescriptions in Latin, to keep their ignorant patients in the dark, they call it *Causa sine qua non*; that is, in plain English, *A cause*, which, if it be absent, absolutely hinders an effect from taking place. Thus a mother is not the primary cause of her child's conception, but causa sine quâ non; that is, such a cause as, if it had been wanting, would have absolutely prevented his being conceived.

If the Calvinists will speak the truth in Latin, I will speak it in plain English. And therefore, standing up still as a witness of the marriage between *prevenient Free-grace*, and *obedient Free-will* [an evangelical marriage this, which I have proved in the *Scripture scales*:] I assert, upon the

O *Pelagianism*, thou wretched, levelling system, how can we, *christians*, sufficiently detest thee, for thus robbing *us* of the peculiar comforts arising from the election of grace, which so eminently distinguishes us from Jews, Turks, and Heathens! And how can we sufficiently decry thee, for robbing, by this means, our sovereign Benefactor of *the praise of the glory of his grace!* Were it not for *Pelagian* unbelief, which makes us regardless of the comforts of our gratuitous *election in Christ*, and for whims of *Calvinian* reprobation, which damp or destroy these comforts; all *Christians* would *always triumph in Christ*; and, *rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory, in the vocation wherewith* they *are called*, they would *thank God for his unspeakable gift.* They would shout electing love as loudly as Zelotes, but not in the unnatural, unscriptural, barbarous, damnatory sense, in which he does it. They would not say, "*Why me*, Lord? *Why me?* Why am I absolutely appointed to *eternal justification*, and *finished salvation*; let me do what I *will*, till irresistible free-grace necessitate me to leave my sins, and go to heaven; whilst most of my neighbours [poor creatures!] are absolutely appointed to eternal wickedness, and finished damnation; let them do what they *can*, till necessitating free-wrath make them draw back to perdition, that they may be eternally damned?"—But what charitable and wondering gratitude, they would cry out, "Why *us*, Lord? Why *us?* Why are *we* [Christians] predestinated and elected to the blessings of the *full* gospel of Christ, from which *Enoch*, the man who walked with thee,—*Abraham*, the man, whom thou calledst *thy friend*,—*Moses*, the

arguments contained in this two-fold Eſſay, that our eternal ſalvation depends, *firſt*, on *God's free-grace*, and *ſecondly*, on *our practical ſubmiſſion* to the doctrines of *grace* and *juſtice*; or, if you pleaſe, on our making our election of *grace* and *juſtice* ſure by faith and its works.

To be a little more explicit: Our *day of ſalvation* begun is *merely* of *free-grace*, and prevents all faith and works; ſince all ſaving faith, and all good works flow from a beginning of free ſalvation. But this is not the caſe with our *continued* and *eternal ſalvation:* for *this* ſalvation depends upon the concurrence of two cauſes; the *firſt* of which is *prevenient and aſſiſting free-grace*, which I beg leave to call *the father-cauſe*; and the *ſecond* is *ſubmiſſive and obedient free-will*, which I take the liberty to call *the mother cauſe*. And I dare ſay, that the *Pelagians* will as ſoon find on earth an adult man, who came into this world without a *father*; and that the Calviniſts will as ſoon find one, who was born without a *mother*, as they will find an *adult* perſon in heaven, who came there without the concurrence of *free-grace* and *free-will*, which I beg leave to call the *paternal* and *maternal cauſes* of our *eternal* ſalvation. And therefore, whilſt the *rigid* Arminians and the *rigid* Calviniſts make two partial, ſolitary, barren goſpels, by parting mercy and juſtice—free-grace and free-will; let Bible chriſtians ſtand up, in theory and practice, for the one entire goſpel of Chriſt. Let them marry preventing and aſſiſting *Free-grace* with prevented and aſſiſted *Free-will:* ſo ſhall they conſiſtently hold the two goſpel-axioms, and evangelically maintain the doctrines of *grace* and *juſtice*, which are all ſuſpended on the *partial* election

the man who talked with thee face to face,—*David*, the man after thy own heart.—*Daniel*, the man greatly beloved,—and *John the Baptiſt*, the man who excelled all the jewiſh prophets, were every one reprobated?"

In ſuch evangelical ſtrains as theſe, ſhould Chriſtians expreſs before God their peculiar gratitude, for their peculiar election and calling: and then, running to each other, with hearts and mouths full of evangelical congratulations, they ſhould ſay, as the Apoſtle did to Timothy, *God hath ſaved us* [chriſtians] *and called us with an holy* [chriſtian] *calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpoſe and grace, which was given us* [chriſtians] *in Chriſt Jeſus, before the world began*, [when God planned the various diſpenſations of his grace] *but is now made manifeſt by the appearing of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who hath abolliſhed death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the goſpel* [of Chriſt——a precious, perfect goſpel, with which he has bleſſed *us*, as well as our neighbours, who are ungrateful enough to *put it from them*,] 2 Tim. i. 9, 10. ——In a word, they ſhould all ſay to their brethren in *the election of* [Chriſtian] *grace: Bleſſed be the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope by the reſurrection of Chriſt, in whom, though now ye ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoice; receiving the end of your* [Chriſtian] *faith, even the* [Chriſtian] *ſalvation of your ſouls: of which ſalvation the prophets enquired, and ſearched diligently, who propheſied of the* [Chriſtian] *grace that ſhould come unto you:—unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themſelves, but unto us* [Chriſtians] *they did*

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election and reprobation of *distinguishing grace*, and on the *impartial* election and reprobation of *remunerative justice*.

Till we do this, we shall spoil the gospel by confounding the dispensations of divine grace: we shall grieve those, whom God has not grieved, and comfort those, whom God would not have comforted; we shall involve the truth in clouds of darkness; and availing ourselves of that darkness, we shall separate what God has joined, and join what he has separated; causing the most unnatural divisions and monstrous mixtures, and doing in the *doctrinal* world what the fallen Corinthian did in the *moral*, when he tore his mother from his father's bosom, and made her his own incestuous wife. In a word, we shall tear the impartial election of justice from the partial election of grace; and, according to our *Pelagian* or *Augustinian* taste, we shall espouse the one, and fight against the other. If we embrace *only* the election of *impartial justice*, we shall propagate proud, dull, and uncomfortable Pelagianism. And if we embrace *only* the election of *partial grace*, we shall propagate wanton antinomianism, and wanton cruelty, or absolute election to, and absolute reprobation from, *eternal* life. We shall generate the conceits of *finished salvation* and *finished damnation*, which are the upper and lower parts of the doctrinal Syren, whom Dr. Crisp mistook for the gospel;—the head and tail of the evangelical *chimera*, which Calvin supposed to have sprung from *the Lion of the tribe of Juda*. But if we *equally* receive the election of *grace* and that of *justice*, we shall have the whole truth, as it is in Jesus—the chaste *woman* who stands *in heaven clothed with the sun, and having*

miniſter the things, which are now reported unto you, by them that have preached the goſpel unto you, with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven; which things the angels deſire to look into, 1 Pet. i. 8. &c. *Unto him* therefore, *that* ſo peculiarly *loved us*, as to elect and call us into his chriſtian, reformed *church, which he hath purchaſed with his own blood*; [peculiarly redeeming it from heatheniſh ignorance, jewiſh bondage, and popiſh ſuperſtition]—*Unto him*, I ſay, *that* thus *loved us* [reformed Chriſtians] *and waſhed us from our ſins* [not by the blood of lambs, and heifers, as Aaron waſhed the jews] *but by his own blood, and hath made us*, [who believe] *kings and prieſts to God and his Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever*, Rev. i. 5, 6. Acts xx. 28.

But while reformed Chriſtians expreſs thus their joy and gratitude, for their *election* to this peculiar ſalvation; they ſhould not forget to guard this comfortable doctrine, in as anti-ſolifidian a manner as St. Paul and St. Peter did, when they ſaid to their fellow-elect: *If every tranſgreſſion and diſobedience* [againſt the goſpel of jewiſh ſalvation] *received a juſt recompence of reward; how ſhall we eſcape, if we neglect ſo great ſalvation* [as that] *which at the firſt began to be ſpoken by the Lord* Jeſus, and his Apoſtles! —*Wherefore the rather, brethren*—[*partakers of the heavenly calling* in Chriſt, who is *the Apoſtle and High-prieſt of our profeſſion* or diſpenſation] *give diligence to make your* [high] *calling and* [diſtinguiſhing] *election ſure: for, if ye do theſe things, ye ſhall never fall* [into the aggravated ruin, which awaits the *neglecters of ſo great ſalvation.*] Heb. ii. 2, 3. iii. 1.—2 Pet. i. 10.

Should

having the moon [Pelagian changes, and Calvinian innovations] *under her feet.* Nor will candid Chriſtians be offended at her having *two breaſts*, to give her children *the ſincere milk of the word*; and *two arms*, to defend herſelf againſt *Pelagianiſm* and *Calviniſm*, the obſtinate errors, which attack her on the right hand and on the left. She has put forth her two arms in this two-fold Eſſay; and, if her adverſaries do not reſiſt her, as the Jews did Stephen by ſtopping their ears, it is to be hoped, that ſome of them will impartially renounce the errors of heated *Pelagius* and heated *Auguſtin*, and will honour Chriſt both as their *Saviour* and their *Judge*, by equally embracing the doctrines of *grace*, and the doctrines of *juſtice*.

END *of the* SECOND ESSAY.

Should a rigid Arminian say, "I cannot reconcile your doctrine of partial grace with divine goodness and equity, and therefore I cannot receive it. Why should not God bear with *all men*, as long as he did with *Manasses?* With *all nations*, as long as he did with the *Jews?* And with *all churches*, as long as he does with the church of *Rome?* I answer:

Mercy may lengthen out her cords on *particular* occasions, to display her boundless extent. But if she did so on *all* occasions, she would countenance sin, and pour oil on the fire of wickedness. If God displayed the same goodness and long-suffering towards *all* sinners, churches, and nations; then *all* sinners would be spared, till they had committed as many atrocious crimes as *Manasses*, who filled Jerusalem with blood and witchcraft. *All* fallen churches would be tolerated, till they had poisoned the gospel-truth with as many errors, as the church of *Rome* imposes upon her votaries. And *all* corrupted nations would not only be preserved, till they had actually *sacrificed their sons and daughters to devils*; but also till they had an opportunity to *kill the prince of life*, coming in person *to gather them, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings*. So universal a mercy as this, would be the greatest cruelty to myriads of men, and instead of setting off divine justice, would for a time lay it under a total eclipse.

Besides, according to this *impartial*, this *levelling* scheme. God would have been obliged to make all men *kings*, as Manasses;——all churches *christian*, as the church of Rome—and all people his *peculiar people*, as the jewish nation. But even then, *distinguishing grace* would not have been abolished; unless God had made all men

men *archangels*, all churches like the *triumphant* church, and all nations like the *glorified* nation which inhabits the heavenly Canaan. So monſtrous are the abſurdities, which reſult from the levelling ſcheme of the men, who laugh at the doctrine of the goſpel-diſpenſations; and of thoſe, who will not allow divine ſovereignty and ſupreme wiſdom, to diſpenſe unmerited favours as they pleaſe; and to deal out their talents with a variety which, upon the whole, anſwers the moſt excellent ends; as diſplaying beſt the excellency of a government, where ſovereignty, mercy, and juſtice wiſely agree to ſway their common ſceptre!

Should a Pelagian leveller refuſe to yield to theſe arguments, under pretence that "They lead to the *Calvinian* doctrines of *lawleſs* grace, *free*-wrath, and *abſolute* reprobation; I anſwer this capital objection five different ways.

(1) The objector is greatly miſtaken: For, holding forth the gratuitous reprobation of partial grace, as the Scriptures do, is the only way to open the eyes of candid Calviniſts, to keep the ſimple from drinking into their plauſible error, and to reſcue the multitude of paſſages, on which they found their abſolute gratuitous predeſtination to eternal life and eternal death. I ſay it again, rigid Calviniſm is the child of *confuſion*, and lives merely by ſucking its mother's corrupted milk. Would you deſtroy the brat, only kill its mother: deſtroy *confuſion: divide the word of God aright:* carry goſpel-light into the centre of the dark womb, where that monſtrous error has been conceived; and lead the rigid predeſtinarians to the truth—the delightful truth, whence their error has been derived *by the* miſtake or *ſleight of men, and by the cun-*

ning craftineſs whereby the ſpirit of error *lies in wait to deceive*, and you will deſtroy the *antinominian* election, the *cruel* reprobation which paſs for goſpel. In order to this, you ſtrike at thoſe ſerpents with the ſwords of your mouths, and cry out, "Abſurd!—unſcriptural—horrible! —diabolical!" But, by this means, you will never kill one of them: there is but one method to extirpate them:—Hold out the *partial election and reprobation* maintained by the ſacred writers. Throw your rod, like Moſes, amidſt the rods of the Magicians. Let it firſt become a ſerpent, which you can take up with pleaſure and ſafety: diſplay the *true partiality* of divine grace: openly preach the ſcripture *election* of grace; and boldly aſſert the gratuitous *reprobation* of inferior grace. So ſhall your harmleſs ſerpent ſwallow up the venomous ſerpent of your adverſaries. The true *reprobation* ſhall devour the falſe. Bigoted Calviniſts will be confounded, hide themſelves for fear of the truth: and candid Calviniſts will ſee *the finger of God*, and acknowledge, that your rod is ſuperior to theirs, and that the *harmleſs reprobation of inferior grace* which we preach, has fairly ſwallowed up the *horrible reprobation of free-wrath*, which they contend for.

Be neither aſhamed nor afraid of our Serpent —our *Reprobation*. Like Chriſt, it has not only the *wiſdom of the ſerpent*; but alſo the *innocency of the dove*. You may handle without danger: Nay, you may put it into your boſom; and, inſtead of ſtinging you with deſpair, and filling you with chilling horror, it will warm your ſoul with admiration for the *manifold wiſdom* and *variegated goodneſs* of God; it will make you ſharp-ſighted in the truth of the goſpel, and in the errors of overdoing evangeliſts,

geliſts. In the light of this truth you will, every where, ſee a glorious rainbow, where before you ſaw nothing but a dark cloud.

When our ſerpent has had this bleſſed effect you may take it out of your boſom for external uſe, and it will become a rod fit to chaſtiſe the errors of *Pelagius* and *Auguſtin*—of *Calvin* and *Socinus*. But uſe it with ſuch gentleneſs and candour, that all the ſpectators may ſee, you do not deal in free-wrath, and that there is as much difference between the gratuitous reprobation, which Calvin and Zanchius hold forth, and the gratuitous reprobation, which our bleſſed Lord and St. Paul maintain, as there is between the blaſted, dry rod of *Korah*, and the bloſſoming, fragrant rod of *Aaron:* between a fire, which rapidly conſumes your houſe:—between the bright morning ſtar, *inferior* in light to the ſun, and an horribly glaring comet, which draws its fiery tail over the earth to ſmite it with an eternal curſe, and to drag with *mercileſs neceſſity* a majority of its frightened inhabitants into everlaſting burnings.

(2) *Our gratuitous* reprobation is not a reprobation from *all* ſaving grace, as that of the Calviniſts: but only from the *ſuperior* bleſſings of ſaving grace. It is therefore as contrary to Calvinian reprobation, as *initial ſalvation* is contrary to *enſured damnation*. It is perfectly conſiſtent with the *free gift which is come* [in various degrees] *upon all men to juſtification*. We ſteadily aſſert with Chriſt and St. Paul, that *the ſaving grace of God hath appeared to all men*, and that all the reprobates of ſuperior grace, that is, all who are refuſed *three*, *four*, or *five* talents of grace, receive *two*, or at leaſt *one* talent of *true*

and *saving* grace. There never was a spark of Calvinian free-wrath in God against them. They are all redeemed with a temporal redemption. They have all an accepted time, and a day of initial salvation, with sufficient means and helps to *work out their own* [eternal] *salvation* according to their gospel-dispensation. We grant that God does not bestow upon them so many of his gratuitous favours, as he does on his peculiar people. But if he gives them less, he requires the less of them; for he is too just to insist upon the improvement of *five* talents from the servants, on whom he has bestowed but *one* talent.

To understand this perfectly, distinguish between the two gospel-axioms, or [if you please] between the doctrines of *grace* and the doctrines of *justice*. According to the *former*, God, with a *partial* hand, bestows upon us *primary* and *merely gratuitous* favours. And, according to the *latter*, he with an *impartial* hand, imparts to us *secondary*, and *remunerative* favours. God's *primary*, and merely-gratuitous favours depend entirely on his *partial* grace: so far all Christians should agree with *Calvin*, and hold with him the doctrine of *grace*. But God's *secondary*, *remunerative* favours, depending on his rewarding grace, conditional promise, and distributive justice, depend of consequence in some degree on *our* free agency: for our *free-will*, by making a bad or good use of God's *primary favours*, secures to us his righteous punishments, or *gracious rewards*, that is, his *secondary favours*. And herein all Christians should agree with *Arminius*. By thus joining the peculiar excellencies of Calvinism and Arminianism, we embrace the whole gospel,

gospel, and keep together the doctrines of *grace* and *justice*, which the partial ministers of the two modern gospels rashly tear asunder.

(3) Many of the persons, who have been reprobated from superior favours by partial grace, have been eternally saved by improving their *one talent* of inferior favour; whilst some of those, who had a large share in the election of distinguishing grace, are [it is to be feared] condemned for the non-improvement or abuse of the *five talents*, which the grace had richly bestowed upon them. Who, for example, will dare say, that *Melchisedec*, *Esau*, *Jonathan*, and *Mephibosheth* are damned, because they were reprobated with respect to the peculiar favours, which God bestowed upon *Abraham*, *Jacob*, *David*, and *Solomon*? Or that *Judas*, *Ananias*, and *Sapphira* are saved, because they were all three *chosen and called* to the highest blessings, which *distinguishing* grace ever bestowed upon mortals.—the blessings of the *new* covenant, which is the *best* covenant of peculiarity; and because *Judas* was even *chosen* and *called* to the high dignity of the Apostleship in this excellent covenant?

(4) We all know how fatal Calvinian reprobation must prove to those who are its miserable subjects. A man may be seized by the plague and live. But if that fatal decree, as drawn by some mistaken theologists, seize on ten thousand souls, not one of them can escape: their hopes of salvation are sacrificed for ever. But the gratuitous election and reprobation, which the scripture maintains, are attended with as favourable circumstances, as the elections and reprobations mentioned in the following illustrations.

Whilſt the ſun is alone elected to gild the day, the moon, though reprobated from that honour, is nevertheleſs elected to ſilver the night, in conjunction with ſtars of different brightneſs.—The *holy place* of the temple was reprobated, with reſpect to the glory of the *Holy of holies:* it contained neither the cherubim, nor the mercy ſeat, nor the ark of the covenant; but yet, it was elected to the honour of containing the golden altar, on which the incenſe was burned.—The *court of the prieſts* was reprobated from the honour of containing the *golden* altar, but yet it was freely elected to the honour of containing the *brazen* altar, on which the ſacrifices were offered.—As for the *court of the Gentiles*, though it was reprobated from all theſe honourable peculiarities, yet it was elected to the advantage of leading to the brazen altar; and the Gentiles, who worſhipped in this court, not only heard at a diſtance the muſic of the prieſts, and diſcovered the ſmoke, which aſcended from the burnt offerings; but, when they looked thro' the open gates, they had a *diſtant* view of the brazen altar, of the fire, which deſcended from heaven upon it, and of the Lamb, which was daily conſumed in the fire. And therefore they were no more abſolutely reprobated from all intereſt in the daily ſacrifice, than Caiaphas was abſolutely elected to an inamiſſible intereſt in the daily oblation, in which his near attendance at the altar gave him the firſt right.—Once more, the Tribe of *Levi* was elected to the honour of doing the ſervice of the ſanctuary; an honour, from which eleven tribes were reprobated. And, in that choſen tribe, the family of Aaron was elected to the prieſthood and high-prieſthood: peculiar

liar dignities, from which the ſons of Moſes himſelf were all reprobated. Now if it would be abſurd to deduce calvinian reprobation, and unavoidable damnation, from *theſe* elections; is it reaſonable to deduce them [as the Calvinists do] from a gratuitous election to the diſtinguiſhing bleſſings of the *jewiſh* and *chriſtian* covenant?

(5) The difference between the partial reprobation, which the Holy Ghoſt aſſerts, and that which Calvin maintains, is ſo important, that I beg leave to make the reader ſenſible of it by one more illuſtration. God's partial reprobation, which flows from his *inferior favour*, and not from *free-wrath*, may be compared: (1) To the king's *refuſing* a regiment of foot the advantage of riding on horſeback--a free prerogative, which he grants to a regiment of dragoons: And (2) To his *denying* to common ſoldiers the rank of captains; and to captains, the rank of colonels. But Calvin's partial reprobation, which flows from free-wrath, and has nothing to do with any degree of ſaving grace, may be compared to the king's placing a whole regiment of marines in ſuch dreadful circumſtances by ſea and land, that all the ſoldiers, and officers, ſhall be ſooner or later *neceſſitated* to deſert, and to have their brains blown out for deſertion: a diſtinguiſhing ſeverity this, which will ſet off the diſtinguiſhing favour, which his majeſty bears to a company of favourite grenadiers, on whom he has abſolutely ſet his everlaſting love, and who cannot be ſhot for deſertion, becauſe they are tied to their colours by *neceſſity*--an adamantine chain, which either keeps them from running away, or irreſiſtibly pulls them back to their colours as often

as they desert. Thus all the mariners wear the badge of *absolute free-wrath:* not one of them can possibly escape being shot: and all the grenadiers wear the badge of *absolute free-grace:* not one of them can possibly be shot, let them behave in ever so treacherous a manner for ever so long a time. But alas! my illustration fails in the main point. When a soldier, who has been *necessitated* to desert, is shot, his punishment is over in a moment; but when a reprobate, who has been *necessitated* to sin on, is damned, he must go into a fire unquenchable, where the smoke of his torment shall ascend for ever and ever.

By these various answers candid Arminians will, I hope be convinced, that [although Calvinian reprobation is unscriptural, irrational, and cruel] the *gratuitous* election and reprobation maintained in the preceding pages is truly evangelical, and, of consequence, perfectly consistent with the dictates of sound reason and pure morality.

END *of the* FIRST ESSAY.

The RECONCILIATION, &c.

SECTION V.

Inferences from the two-fold Eſſay.

IF the preceding Eſſays on *Bible-Calviniſm*, and *Bible-Arminianiſm*, are agreeable to ſcripture and reaſon, I may ſum up their contents in ſome inferences, the juſtneſs of which will, I humbly hope, recommend itſelf to the reader's good underſtanding and candour.

I. The doctrine of a *gratuitous*, *partial*, and *perſonal* election and reprobation is truly ſcriptural. So far *Calviniſm* is nothing but *the goſpel*. On the other hand, the doctrine of a *judicial*, *impartial*, and *conditional* election and reprobation, is perfectly ſcriptural alſo: and ſo far *Arminianiſm* is nothing but *the goſpel*. For, as light flows from the ſun: ſo Bible-Calviniſm does from the *firſt* goſpel-axiom [*Our Salvation is of God:*] And as a river flows from its ſource; ſo Bible-Arminianiſm does from the *ſecond* goſpel-axiom [*Our deſtruction is of ourſelves.*] Confounding theſe two axioms and elections, or denying one of them, has greatly injured the doctrines of grace and juſtice, darkened all the goſpel diſpenſations, and bred the miſunderſtandings, which formerly ſubſiſted between the followers of

of Auguſtin and thoſe of Pelagius, and now ſubſiſt between the Calviniſts and the Arminians.

II. It is abſurd to ridicule the doctrine of a *two-fold election* under pretence that it flows from what ſome people are pleaſed to call "*the flights of* my *romantic pen*;" ſince the full tide of ſcripture evidently flows in two channels; an *election* of *partial grace*, according to which God grants or denies his primary favours, as a *Sovereign Benefactor*; and an *election of impartial juſtice*, according to which he beſtows rewards, or inflicts puniſhments, as a *ſupreme Judge*.

III. Nor does this doctrine deſerve to be called *new*, ſince it is ſo manifeſtly found in the *oldeſt* book in the world. An objection drawn from the ſeeming *novelty* of theſe obſervations, would be peculiarly unreaſonable in the mouth of a member of the Church of England; becauſe ſhe indirectly points out the diſtinction, which I contend for. That our Reformers had ſome inſight into the doctrine of a *partial election* of grace in Chriſt, and of an *impartial election* of juſtice through Chriſt, appears, I think, from the ſtandard writings of our Church. The beginning of our ſeventeenth article evidently countenances our *unconditional election of grace in Chriſt*, whilſt the latter part ſecures the doctrine of our *conditional election of juſtice* through Chriſt. Few Calviniſts will be ſo prejudiced as to deny, that our church guards the doctrines [and conſequently the election] of *juſtice* in this important paragraph: "Furthermore we muſt receive God's promiſes in ſuch wiſe as they are generally ſet forth in holy ſcripture."—

Now

Now the promiſes being *generally* ſet forth in a *conditional* manner in God's word, it is evident, that our church, in giving us this caution and charge, intends to ſecure the *conditionality* of the *election of juſtice*; *the conditionality* of this election being inſeparably connected with the *conditionality* of God's *promiſes*; juſt as the *conditionality* of the *reprobation of juſtice*, is inſeparably connected with the *conditionality* of God's threatnings.

In conformity to this doctrine our church aſſures us, in her homily on good works, that "If he [*the elected thief*] had lived, and not regarded faith and the works thereof, he ſhould have *loſt his ſalvation again*;" or, which comes to the ſame thing, he ſhould have *forfeited his election* of partial grace by loſing the election of impartial juſtice. Our liturgy ſpeaks the ſame language, witneſs that prayer in the office of baptiſm: "Grant that theſe children [or perſons] now to be baptized, &c. *may ever remain* in the number of thy *faithful* and *elect* children, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord." That is, Grant that theſe perſons, who are now admitted into thy *Chriſtian* church according to the election of grace *in Chriſt*, may ſo believe and obey, as never to forfeit the privileges of this election, and ever to ſhare in the privileges of thy *faithful* children, who are *elect* in the full ſenſe of the word; the obedient being the only perſons, who keep their part in the election of grace, and ſecure a ſhare in the election of juſtice. Such complete elect are the *ſheep* which *hear Chriſt's voice and follow his* ſteps: *None ſhall pluck them out of his hands.* The talent of their election of grace ſhall never be

be taken from them: They ſhall all hear theſe cheering words, *Well done, thou good and faithful ſervant:* They ſhall all *enter into the joy of their Lord,* and eternally ſhare in the double privileges of the election of grace and juſtice.

IV. The gratuitous, partial election and reprobation, which the ſcriptures maintain, chiefly refer to three grand covenants, which God has made with man, and to the greater or leſs bleſſings which belong to theſe covenants. The *firſt* of theſe covenants takes in *all mankind*; for it was made with ſpared *Adam* after the fall, and confirmed to preſerved *Noah* after the flood; and every body knows that *Adam* and *Noah* are the two general parents of *all mankind.* The *ſecond* of theſe covenants was made with *Abraham*, ratified to *Iſaac* and *Jacob, ordained in the hands of Moſes*, and *ordered in all things and* peculiarly *enſured* to *David.* This covenant takes in the firſt peculiar people of God, or the Jewiſh nation; and includes more particularly *David* and his family, of which the Meſſiah was to be born.—The *third* of theſe covenants was made with Chriſt, as *the captain of our ſalvation*, and *the High-prieſt of our profeſſion* or diſpenſation; and takes in God's *moſt peculiar people*, or the *Chriſtian Church.* The firſt of theſe three covenants is *general.* The other are two covenants of *peculiarity*, the former of which is frequently called in ſcripture *the old Covenant*, or *the old Teſtament*, whilſt the latter is ſpoken of by the name of *new Covenant* or *new Teſtament.* The two firſt of theſe covenants were ſealed with the blood of ſacrificed beaſts or circumciſed men, but the

the laſt was ſealed with the blood of the Lamb of God. Hence our Lord termed it, *The new covenant in my blood*, Luke xxii. 20; calling his blood, *My blood of the New Teſtament*, Matt. xxvi. 28. Hence alſo the Apoſtle obſerves, that *Jeſus was made a ſurety of a better teſtament*, and that *he is the Mediator of the New Teſtament*, which is far ſuperior to that which *was ordained by angels in the hand of* Moſes, the *Mediator* of the Old Teſtament. See Heb. vii. 22. ix. 15. xii. 24. 2 Cor. iii. 6. Gal. iii. 19.

V. Theſe three grand Covenants give birth to *Gentiliſm*, *Judaiſm*, and *Chriſtianity*:—three divine religions or diſpenſations of grace, from the confounding of which partial divines have formed the ſchemes of religion, which I beg leave to call *rigid* Arminianiſm, and *rigid* Calviniſm.

VI. The error of *rigid* Arminians, with reſpect to thoſe three grand covenants, conſiſts in not *ſufficiently* diſtinguiſhing them, and in not maintaining with *ſufficient* plainneſs, that they are all covenants of redeeming *grace*; that *Judaiſm* is the *old covenant* of partial, redeeming *grace*; and that *Chriſtianity* is the *new covenant* of partial, redeeming *grace*.

VII. The error of *rigid* Calviniſts conſiſts in confounding the covenants of *creating* and *redeeming* grace, and in reducing them all to two; the one a covenant of *non-redemption*, which they call *the law*; and the other, a covenant of *particular redemption*, which they call *the goſpel*. To form the firſt of theſe unſcriptural covenants, they jumble the *Creator's law* given to *innocent* man in paradiſe, with the *Redeemer's law* given to the Iſraelites on Mount

Sinai. Nor do they ſee, that theſe two laws, or covenants, are as different from each other, as a covenant made with *ſinleſs* man, without a prieſt, a ſacrifice, and a mediator, is different from a covenant made with *ſinful* man, and *ordained in the hand of a Mediator*, with an interceding prieſt and atoning ſacrifices, Gal. iii. 19. Secondly, they ſuppoſe, that all men now born into the world are under the imaginary *law*, that is, under the unſcriptural, confuſed mixture of the Adamic law of innocence, and of the Moſaic law of Sinai:—an error this, which is ſo much the more glaring, as no man [except Chriſt] was ever placed under the law or covenant of innocence, ſince the Lord entered into a *mediatorial* covenant with fallen Adam: And no man has been put under the Law or covenant of Moſes, from the time that covenant has been *aboliſhed and done away in Chriſt*, 2 Cor. iii. 7, 14, which happened when Chriſt ſaid, *It is finiſhed*, and when *the veil of the temple* [a type of the Jewiſh diſpenſation] *was rent from top to bottom*.

So capital an error as that of the rigid Calviniſts about the *law*, could not but be productive of a ſimilar error about the *goſpel*. And therefore when they had formed the mercileſs covenant which they call *the law*, by confounding the precept and curſe of the law of innocence, with the precept and curſe of the law of Moſes abſtracted from all mediatorial promiſes;—when they had done this, I ſay, it was natural enough for them to miſtake and confound the promiſes of the three grand covenants, which I have juſt mentioned: I mean the *one general* covenant of grace, made

made with Adam and Noah; and the *two particular* covenants of grace, the former of which was *ordained in the hands of Moſes the ſervant of God*; and the latter in the hands of *Chriſt*, the *only begotten ſon of God*. Hence it is, that overlooking the promiſes of the *general* covenant of grace, and conſidering only the promiſes of *Judaiſm* and *Chriſtianity*, which are the two grand covenants of *peculiar grace*, the rigid Calviniſts fancy that there is but * *one* covenant of grace;—that this covenant is *particular*; that it was made with Chriſt only;—that it was a covenant of *unchangeable* favour on the part of the Father, of *eternal* redemption on the part of the Son, and of *irreſiſtible* ſanctification on the part of the Holy Ghoſt;—that ſome men, called *the elect*, are abſolutely and eternally intereſted in this covenant; that other men, called *the reprobates*, are abſolutely and everlaſtingly excluded from it;—that *finiſhed ſalvation through Chriſt* is the unavoidable lot of the fortunate elect, who are ſuppoſed to be under the abſolute bleſſing of a lawleſs goſpel;—and that *finiſhed damnation through Adam*, is the unavoidable portion of the unfortunate reprobates, who are ſuppoſed to be from their mother's womb

* Zelotes will poſſibly laugh at the inſinuation, that there is more than *one* covenant of grace. If he does, I will aſk him, if a *covenant of grace* is not the ſame thing as a *covenant of promiſe*; and if St. Paul does not expreſsly mention *The Covenants of promiſe*, Eph. ii. 12, and *a better covenant*, which was *eſtabliſhed upon better promiſes*, than *the firſt* (particular) covenant of promiſe? Heb. viii. 6, 7.

under the abſolute, irreverſible, everlaſting curſe of a mercileſs law, and of an abſolutely Chriſtleſs covenant.

VII. We may ſay to *rigid* Calviniſts, and *rigid* Arminians, what God ſaid once to the Jewiſh prieſts, *Ye have been partial in the law*, Mal. ii. 9. Nor is it poſſible to reduce their two *partial* ſyſtems to the genuine and full ſtandard of the goſpel, otherwiſe than by conſiſtently guarding the *Calvinian* doctrines of *grace*, by the *Arminian* doctrines of *Juſtice*; and the Arminian doctrines of juſtice, by the Calvinian doctrines of grace: when thoſe two *partial* goſpels are joined in a ſcriptural manner, they do not deſtroy, but balance and illuſtrate each other. Take away from them human additions, or ſupply their deficiencies, and you will reſtore them to their original importance. They will again form the ſpiritual *weights of the ſanctuary*, which are kept for public uſe in the ſacred records, as I humbly hope I have made appear in my *Scripture-Scales*.

VIII. To guard the goſpel againſt the errors of the *rigid* Calviniſts and the *rigid* Arminians, we need then only ſhew that God, as *Creator*, *Redeemer*, and *Sanctifier*, has a right to be, and actually is, *partial* in the diſtribution of *grace*; but that as *Lawgiver*, *Governor*, and *Judge*, he is and ever will be, *impartial* in the diſtribution of *juſtice*. Or, which comes to the ſame thing, we need only reſtore the doctrine of God's various laws, or covenants of grace to its ſcriptural luſtre. *Rigid* Calviniſm will be loſt in Bible-Arminianiſm, and *rigid* Arminianiſm will be loſt in Bible-Calviniſm, as ſoon as Proteſtants will pay a due regard

to

to the following truths. (1) God, for Christ's sake, [dissolved with respect to *us*] the covenant of paradisaical innocence, when he turned man out of a forfeited paradise into this curſed world, for having broken that covenant. Then it was that man's Creator firſt became his *Redeemer:* Then mankind was placed under the *firſt mediatorial* covenant of promiſe. Then our Maker gave to Adam, and to all the human ſpecies, which was in Adam's loins, a *Saviour*, who is called *the ſeed of the woman—the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world*, who was to make the *paradiſaical* covenant honourable by his *ſinleſs* obedience.—(2) Accordingly, *Chriſt by the grace of God, taſted death for every man*; purchaſing for *all men* the privileges of the *general* covenant of grace, which God made with *Adam*, and ratified to *Noah*, the ſecond *general* parent of mankind.—(3) Chriſt, according to the *peculiar* predeſtination and election of God, *peculiarly* taſted death for *the Jews*, his *firſt* choſen nation and *peculiar* people; purchaſing for them all the privileges of the *peculiar* covenant of grace, which the ſcriptures call *the old covenant* of peculiarity:—(4) That Chriſt, according to the *moſt peculiar* predeſtination and election of God, *moſt peculiarly* taſted death for *the Chriſtians*, his *ſecond* choſen nation and *moſt peculiar* people; procuring for them the invaluable privileges of his own moſt precious goſpel, *by which he has brought life and immortality to* [meridian] *light*; and has richly ſupplied the defects of the Noachic and Moſaic diſpenſations; the firſt of which is noted for its *darkneſs*; and the ſecond for its *veil* and *ſhadow*.——And laſtly, that with reſpect to

thefe *peculiar* privileges, Chrift is faid to have peculiarly *given himfelf for the* [chriftian] *church, that he might cleanfe it with the* [baptifmal] *waffhing of water by the word,* Eph. v. 26; peculiarly *purchafing it by his own blood,* Acts xx. 28; and *delivering it from* heathenifh *darknefs,* and Jewifh fhadows, that it might be *redeemed from all iniquity,* and that his Chriftian people might be *a peculiar people to himfelf, zealous of good works,* even above the *Jews* who *fear God,* and the *Gentiles* who *work righteoufnefs,* Tit. ii. 14.

IX. As foon as we underftand the nature of *the covenants of promife,* and the doctrine of the difpenfations of divine grace, we have a key to open the myftery of God's gratuitous election and reprobation. We can eafily underftand, that, when a man is elected *only* to the *general* bleffings of *gentilifm,* he is reprobated from the bleffings *peculiar* to *judaifm* and *chriftianity.* And that, when he is elected to the bleffings of *chriftianity,* he is elected to inherit the fubftance of all the covenanted bleffings of God; becaufe the higheft difpenfation takes in the inferior ones, as the authority of a colonel includes that of a lieutenant and a captain; or as meridian light takes in the dawn of day, and the morning-light.

X. Our election from gentilifm or judaifm to the bleffings of chriftianity, is an *election of peculiar grace.* It is to be hoped, that few Arminians are fo unreafonable as to think, that God might not have deprived us of *New Teftament*-bleffings, as he did Mofes; and of *Old Teftament*-bleffings, as he did Noah; leaving us under the general covenant of *gentilifm,* as he did that patriarch.

XI. When

XI. When God gratuitously elected and called *the Jews* to be his *peculiar people*, and *chosen nation*, he reprobated all the other nations, that is, all the Gentiles, from that honour:—an unspeakable honour this, which the Jews thought God had appropriated to them for ever. But when Christ formed his church, he elected to its privileges the Gentiles as well as the Jews: insomuch that to enter into actual possession of all the blessings of christianity, when a Jew or Gentile is *called* by the preaching of the gospel of Christ, nothing more is required of him, than to *make his* free *calling and election sure* by *the obedience of faith*. That God had a right to extend his *election* of *peculiar* grace to the *believing* Gentiles, and to *reprobate* the *unbelieving* Jews, is the point which St. Paul chiefly labours in, Rom. ix. And that the privileges of this election, which God has extended to the Gentiles, are immensely great, is what the Apostle informs us of, in the three first chapters of his Epistle to the Ephesians.

XII. Our election to christianity and its peculiar blessings, being *entirely gratuitous*, and preceding every work of christian obedience: nothing can be more absurd and unevangelical, than to rest it upon works of any sort. Hence it is, that when St. Paul maintains the partial *election of* richest *grace*, he says, speaking of the Jews, *There is* [among them] *a remnant according to the election of grace:* That is, "There is a considerable number of Jews, who, like myself, make their gratuitous calling and election to the blessings of christianity sure through faith." For whenever

ever there were Jews and Gentiles, the Jews had the honour of the *firſt* call: ſo far was God from abſolutely reprobating them from his chriſtian *covenant of promiſe!* If you aſk, why the Apoſtle calls this election to the bleſſings of chriſtianity *the election of grace*, I anſwer, that it *peculiarly* deſerves this name, becauſe it is both *peculiarly gracious*, and *amazingly gratuitous*. *And* therefore, adds the Apoſtle, *if* this election *is by* [mere] *grace, then it is no more of works; otherwiſe grace is no more* [mere] *grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more of* [mere] *grace: otherwiſe work is no more work*, Rom. xi. 5, 6.*

XIII. If the *rigid* Arminians are culpable for being aſhamed of God's evangelical partiality, for overlooking his diſtinguiſhing love, and for caſting a veil over his election of grace; the *rigid* Calviniſts are not leſs blamable for turning that holy election into an unſcriptural and abſolute election, which leaves no

* My light and theological accuracy, have [I hope] increaſed ſince I wrote the *Equal Check*. I did not then *clearly* ſee that *the election of grace*, of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks in this verſe, is our *gratuitous* election to the bleſſings of *chriſtianity*, as it is oppoſed to *judaiſm*, and not merely as it is oppoſed to the *Adamic covenant of works*. I had not then ſufficiently conſidered theſe words of St. John: *The law* [i. e. the Jewiſh diſpenſation] *came by Moſes, but grace and truth*, [that is, a *more gracious*, and *brighter* diſpenſation] *came by Jeſus Chriſt*. Hence it follows, that this expreſſion, *the election of grace* [when a ſacred writer ſpeaks of the *Jewiſh* and of the *Chriſtian* diſpenſations, which St. Paul does throughout this part of his Epiſtle to the Romans] means our *gratuitous election to chriſtianity*, or to the peculiar bleſſings of *the goſpel of Chriſt*.

room

room for the propriety of making our election sure, and is attended with an unscriptural and absolute reprobation, as odious as *free-wrath*, and as dreadful as *ensured damnation*.

This mercileſs and abſolute reprobation is the fundamental error of the *rigid* Papiſts, as well as of the *rigid* Calviniſts. Take away this Popiſh principle, "There is no ſalvation out of the church: a damning reprobation reſts upon all who die out of her pale;" and down comes *perſecuting* popery. There is no pretext left to force Popiſh errors upon men by fire, faggot, or maſſacres; and the burning of heretics gives place to the charity, which hopeth all things.—Again: Take away this principle of the *rigid* Calviniſts; "There is abſolutely no redemption, no ſalvation, but for a remnant according to the *new* covenant, and the election of God's partial grace: an abſolute reprobation, and an unavoidable damnation, reſt upon all mankind beſides:" Take away, I ſay, this principle of the *rigid* Calviniſts, and down comes *unſcriptural* Calviniſm, with all the contentions, which it perpetually begets.

XIV. The rigid Papiſts, who ſet up as defenders of the doctrines of *juſtice*, and yet hold *Popiſh reprobation*, are full as inconſiſtent as the rigid *Calviniſts*, who ſet up as defenders of the *doctrines of grace*, and yet hold *Calvinian reprobation*: for *Popiſh* and *Calvinian reprobation* equally confound the goſpel-diſpenſations, and leave divine *juſtice* and *grace* neither root nor branch, with reſpect to all thoſe, who die unacquainted with chriſtianity, that is, with reſpect to far the greateſt part of mankind.

XV. To conclude: Milton ſays ſomewhere, "There is a certain ſcale of *duties*, a certain hierarchy

hierarchy of upper and lower *commands*, which for want of ſtudying in right order, all the world is in confuſion." What the great man ſaid of the *ſcale of duties* and *commands*, may with equal propriety be affirmed of the *ſcale* of evangelical *truths*, and the hierarchy of upper and lower *goſpel-diſpenſation*. For want of ſtudying them in right order, all the church is in confuſion. The moſt effectual, not to ſay the *only* way of ending theſe theological diſputes of Chriſtians, and deſtroying the errors of *levelling* Pelagianiſm, *antinomian* Calviniſm, *confuſed* Arminianiſm, and *reprobating* Popery, is to reſtore primitive harmony and fulneſs to the partial goſpels of the day; which can be done with eaſe, among candid and judicious enquires after truth, by placing the doctrine of *the diſpenſations* in its ſcripture-light; and by holding forth *the doctrines of grace* and *juſtice* in all their evangelical brightneſs. This has been attempted in the two-fold Eſſay, from which theſe inferences are drawn. Whether the well-meant attempt ſhall be ſucceſsful with reſpect to *one*, is a queſtion, which *thy* reaſon and candor, gentle reader, are called upon to decide.

SECT. VI.

The Plan of a general reconciliation, and union, between the moderate Calviniſts and the candid Arminians.

BY the junction of the doctrines of *grace* and *juſtice*, which, I hope, is effected in the two-fold Eſſay on *Bible-Calviniſm* and *Bible-Arminianiſm*,

Arminianiſm, the goſpel of Chriſt recovers its original fulneſs and glory, and two goſpel-axioms are equally ſecured. For, on the one hand, the *abſolute ſovereignty*, and *partial goodneſs* of our *Creator* and *Redeemer*, ſhine as the meridian blaze of day, without caſting the leaſt ſhade upon his Truth and Equity: you have no election of free-grace without a reprobation of free-wrath. And, on the other hand, the *impartial juſtice* of our *Governor* and *Judge*, appears like an unſpotted ſun, whoſe brightneſs is perfectly conſiſtent with the tranſcendant ſplendor of free-grace and diſtinguiſhing love. The elect receive *the reward of the inheritance* with feelings of pleaſing wonder, and ſhouts of humble praiſe. Nor have the reprobates the leaſt ground to ſay, that the Judge of all the earth does not do right, and that they are loſt *merely* becauſe irreſiſtible power *neceſſitated* them to ſin by Adam without remedy, that they might be damned by Chriſt without poſſibility of eſcape. Thus the *gracious* and *righteous* ways of God with man are equally vindicated, and the whole controverſy terminates in the following concluſion, which is the ground of the reconciliation, to which moderate Calviniſts and candid Arminians are invited.

Bible-Calviniſm, and *Bible-Arminianiſm*, are two eſſential, oppoſite parts of the goſpel, which agree as perfectly together, as the two wings of a palace, the oppoſite ramparts of a regular fortreſs, and the different views of a fine face conſidered by perſons who ſtand, ſome on the right, and ſome on the left hand of the beauty,

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who draws their attention. *Rigid Calviniſts** and *rigid Arminians** are both in the wrong; the former, in obſcuring the doctrines of *impartial juſtice*; and the latter, in clouding the doctrines of *partial grace:* but *moderate * Calviniſts*, and *candid * Arminians*, are very near each other, and very near the truth; the difference there is between them being more owing to confuſion,

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* *Rigid Calviniſts* are perſons who hold the Manichean doctrine of abſolute neceſſity, and maintain both an unconditional election of free-grace in Chriſt, and an unconditional reprobation of free-wrath in Adam. *Moderate Calviniſts* are men, who renounce the doctrine of abſolute neceſſity, ſtand up for the election of free-grace, and are aſhamed of the reprobation of free-wrath. *Rigid Arminians* are perſons, who will not hear of an unconditional election, make more of free-will than of free-grace, oppoſe God's gracious ſovereignty, deny his partiality, and condemn calviniſm in an unſcriptural manner. *Candid Arminians* are people, who mildly contend for the doctrines of Juſtice, and are willing to hear with candor, what the judicious calviniſts have to ſay in defence of the doctrines of grace.

In my preparatory Eſſay, I have expreſſed myſelf as one, who *ſometimes* doubts whether Arminius did ſee the doctrine of election in a clear light. It may be proper to account here for a degree of ſeeming inconſiſtency into which this tranſient doubt has betrayed me. Having been long ill, and at a diſtance from my books, I have not lately looked into Arminius's works: nor did I ever read them carefully through, as every one ſhould have done, who *poſitively* condemns or clears him. And if I have ſomewhere *poſitively* ſaid, that he was not clear in the doctrine of *election*, I did it: (1) Becauſe I judged of Arminius's doctrine by that of the Arminians, who ſeem to me to be in general, (as I have been for years) unacquainted with the diſtinction between the election of grace and that of juſtice—(2) Becauſe at the ſynod of Dort, the Arminians abſolutely refuſed to debate firſt the point of *election*, which the Calviniſts wanted them to do. Whence I concluded, that Arminius had not placed that point of doctrine in a light ſtrong enough to expel the darkneſs

fuſion, want of proper explanation, and miſapprehenſion of each others ſentiments, than to any real, inimical oppoſition to the truth, or to one another. And therefore, they have no more reaſon to fall out with each other, than maſons, who build the oppoſite wings of the ſame building; ſoldiers, who defend the oppoſite ſides of the ſame fortification: painters, who take different views of the ſame face; or loyal ſubjects, who vindicate different, but equally juſt, claims of their royal maſter.

Since there is ſo *immaterial* a difference between the moderate Calviniſts, and the candid Arminians; why do they keep at ſuch a diſtance from each other? Why do they not publicly give one another the right hand of fellowſhip, and let all the world know, that

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which rigid Calviniſm has ſpread over it.—And (3) Becauſe it is generally ſuppoſed, that Arminius leaned to the error of Pelagius, who did not do juſtice to the election of grace. Mr. Bayle, for example, in his life of Arminius ſays; "Arminius condemned the ſupralapſarian Beza, and afterwards acknowledged no other election than that which was grounded on the obedience of ſinners to the call of God by Jeſus Chriſt." If this account of Mr. Bayle is juſt, it is evident, that Arminius, as well as Pelagius, admitted *only* the election of *juſtice*. However, a candid clergyman, who has read Arminius, aſſures me, that in ſome parts of his writings, he does juſtice to the unconditional election of *grace*. And indeed this election is ſo conſpicuous in the ſcripture, that it is hard to conceive, it ſhould *never* have been diſcovered by ſo judicious a divine as Arminius is ſaid to have been. The difficulty in this matter, is not to meet and ſalute the truth *now and then*, but to hold her faſt, and walk ſteadily with her, acroſs all the mazes of error. The light of evangeliſts ſhould not break forth now and then, as a flaſh of lightning does out of a dark cloud; but it ſhould ſhine conſtantly, and with increaſing luſtre, as the light of the unecliped ſun.

they are *brethren*, and will henceforth own, love, help, and defend each other as fuch? That *no eſſential* difference keeps them aſunder, I prove by the following argument.

If candid Arminians will make no material objection to my Eſſay on Bible-Calviniſm; and if judicious Calviniſts will not condemn my Eſſay on Bible-Arminianiſm as unſcriptural; it is evident that the difference between them is *not capital:* and that it ariſes rather from want of light to ſee the *whole* truth *clearly*, than from an obſtinate enmity to any material part of the truth.

Nor is this a ſentiment peculiar to myſelf: I hold it in common with ſome of the moſt public defenders of the doctrines of grace and juſtice. The Arminians will not think that Mr. J. Weſley is partial to the Calviniſts: and the profeſſing world is no ſtranger to Mr. Row. Hill's zeal againſt the Arminians. Nothing can be more oppoſite than the religious principles of theſe two gentlemen: nevertheleſs they both agree to place the doctrines, which diſtinguiſh pious Calviniſts from pious Arminians, among the *opinions*, which are *not eſſential* to genuine, vital, practical chriſtianity. Mr. Weſley in his thirteenth Journal, page 115, ſays in a letter to a friend, "You have admirably well expreſſed what I mean by an *opinion*, contradiſtinguiſhed from an *eſſential doctrine*. Whatever is compatible with love to Chriſt, and a work of grace, I term an *opinion*, and certainly the holding *particular election* and *final perſeverance* is compatible with theſe."—What he adds in the next page, is perfectly agreeable to *this* candid conceſſion. "Mr. H— and Mr. N— hold this, and yet I believe

believe these have real christian experience. But if so this is only an *opinion*: it is not subversive, [here is clear proof to the contrary] of the very foundations of christian experience. It is compatible with love to Christ, and a genuine work of grace: yea many hold it, at whose feet I desire to be found in the day of the Lord Jesus. If then I oppose this with my whole strength, I am a mere bigot still."—As Mr. Wesley candidly grants here, that persons may hold the Calvinian opinions, which Mr. Hill patronizes, and yet be full of *love to Christ*, and have a genuine *work of grace* on their souls: so Mr. Hill in his late publication, intitled, *A full answer to the Rev. J. Wesley's Remarks*, page 42, candidly acknowledges, that it is possible to hold Mr. Wesley's Arminian principles, and yet to be *serious*, *converted*, and *sound in Christian experience*. His words are: "As for the *serious* and *converted* part of Mr. Wesley's congregations, as I by no means think it necessary for any to be what are commonly called *Calvinists*, in order that they may be *christians*, I can most solemnly declare, however they may judge of me, that I love and honour them not a little, as I am satisfied, that many who are muddled in their judgments, are *sound in their experience*." These two quotations do honour to the moderation of the popular preachers, from whose writings they are extracted. May all the pious Arminians and Calvinists abide by their decisions! So shall they find, that nothing parts them but *unessential opinions*; that they are joined by their mutual belief of the *essential doctrines* of the gospel; and, therefore, that if they oppose

each other with their whole ſtrength, they are "*mere bigots ſtill.*"

To conclude this reconciling argument: if there be numbers of holy ſouls, who are utter ſtrangers to the peculiarities of rigid Calviniſm and rigid Arminianiſm;—if both the Calviniſts and the Arminians can produce a cloud of witneſſes, that their opinions are conſiſtent with the moſt genuine piety, and the moſt extenſive uſefulneſs;—if there have been many excellent men, on both ſides of the queſtion, who (their opponents being judges) have lived in the work of faith, ſuffered with the patience of hope, and died in the triumph of love;—and if, at this very day, we can find, among the clergy and laity, Calviniſts and Arminians, who adorn their chriſtian profeſſion by a blameleſs conduct, and by conſtant labours for the converſion of ſinners, or the edification of ſaints, and who [the Lord being their helper] are ready to ſeal the truth of chriſtianity with their blood;—if this, I ſay, has been, and is ſtill the caſe; is it not indubitable, that people can be *good chriſtians*, whether they embrace the opinions of Calvin, or thoſe of Arminius; and by conſequence, that neither *rigid* Calviniſm, nor *rigid* Arminianiſm, are any *eſſential* part of chriſtianity.

And ſhall we make ſo much of *non eſſentials*, as, on their account, to damp, and perhaps extinguiſh the flame of *love*, which is the moſt important of all the *eſſentials* of chriſtianity? Alas! what is *all faith* good for: yea, all faith adorned with the *knowledge of all* doctrines and *myſteries*, if it be not attended by *charity?* It may indeed help us to *ſpeak with the tongues of men and angls*——to preach like Apoſtles, and talk like Seraphs; but, after all, it will leave

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us mere cyphers, or at beſt a *ſounding braſs*, a pompous *nothing*, in the ſight of the God of love. And therefore, as we would not keep ourſelves out of the kingdom of God, which conſiſts in *love, peace, and joy*; and as we would not promote the intereſts of the kingdom of darkneſs, by carrying the fire of diſcord in our boſoms, and filling our veſſels with the *waters of ſtrife*, which ſo many fooliſh virgins prefer to the *oil of gladneſs*, let us promote *peace* with all our might. Let us remember, that, *in all churches of the ſaints, God is the author of peace*; *that his goſpel is the goſpel of peace*; that *he hath called us to peace*; and that *the fruit of righteouſneſs is ſown in peace of them that make peace.* Let us *ſtudy to be quiet*; *following peace with all men*; and *purſuing* eſpecially *thoſe things, which make for peace* in *the houſhold of faith*: nor let us turn from the bleſſed *purſuit*, till we have attained the bleſſing offered to peace-makers.

The kingdom of love, peace and joy, *ſuffereth violence*: it cannot be taken and kept, without great, and conſtant endeavours. *The violent* alone are able to conquer for it is *taken by* the *force* of earneſt prayer to God, for his bleſſing upon our overtures of peace; and by the vehemence of importunate requeſts to our brethren, that they would grant us an intereſt in their forgiving love, and admit us, for Chriſt's ſake, to the honour of union, and the pleaſure of communion, with them. It is an important part of *the good fight of faith working by love*, to attack the unloving prejudices of our brethren, with a meekneſs of wiſdom, which turneth away wrath; with a patience of hope, which a thouſand repulſes cannot beat off;

with a perſeverance of love, which taketh no denial; and with an ardor of love, which floods of contempt cannot abate. May God haſten the time when all the ſoldiers of Chriſt ſhall ſo learn and practiſe this part of the chriſtian exerciſe as to overcome the bigotry of their brethren! Nor let us think, that this is impoſſible: for if the love of Chriſt has conquered us, why ſhould we deſpair of its conquering others? And if the unjuſt judge, who neither feared God, nor regarded man, was nevertheleſs overcome by the importunity of a poor widow; why ſhould we doubt of overcoming, by the ſame means, our fellow-chriſtians, who fear God, rejoice in Chriſt, regard men, and love their brethren? Let us only convince them by every chriſtian method, that we are *their* brethren *indeed*, and we ſhall find moſt of them far more ready to return our love, than we have found them ready to return our provocations or indifference.

Should it be aſked, what are thoſe chriſtian methods, by which we could perſuade our Calvinian or Arminian brethren, that we are *their brethren* indeed? I anſwer, that all theſe methods center in theſe few ſcriptural directions: *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. Love* your opponents, though they ſhould *deſpitefully uſe you. Bleſs them*, though they ſhould *curſe you: pray for them*, though they ſhould *perſecute you.* Wait upon them, and *ſalute them* as brethren, though they ſhould keep at as great a diſtance from you, as if you were their enemies: *For if you ſhew love* to them *who ſhew love to you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the ſame? And if ye ſalute your brethren only* who kindly

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ſalute you; *what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans ſo?* But treat them as God treats us: ſo ſhall you *be the children of your Father, who is in heaven, for he maketh his ſun to riſe, and ſendeth his rain upon* us all. *Be ye therefore perfect even as he is perfect.* No bigot ever obſerved theſe goſpel-directions. And it is only by obſerving them, that we can break the bars of party-ſpirit; and paſs from the cloſe confinement, of bigotry into the *glorious liberty* of brotherly love.

The Scriptures were probably before the eyes of a laborious miniſter of Chriſt, when he drew up ſome years ago, a plan of union among the clergymen of the eſtabliſhed church, who agree in theſe eſſentials; "(1) Original ſin:—(2) Juſtification by faith:—(3) Holineſs of heart and life: provided their life be anſwerable to their doctrines." This plan is as follows. "But what union would you deſire among theſe? Not an union of opinions. They might agree or diſagree, touching *abſolute decrees* on the one hand, and *perfection* on the other. Not an union in expreſſion. Theſe may ſtill ſpeak of the *imputed righteouſneſs*, and thoſe of the *merits of Chriſt*. Not an union with regard to outward order. Some may ſtill remain *quite regular*; and ſome *quite irregular*; and ſome *partly regular and partly irregular*."——[Not an union of ſocieties. Some, who do not ſee the need of diſcipline, may ſtill labour without forming any ſociety at all: others may have a ſociety, whoſe members are united by the bands of a *lax* diſcipline. And others, who have learned by experience that profeſſors can never be kept long together without the help of a *ſtrict* diſcipline, may

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ſtrengthen their union with thoſe who are like-minded, by agreeing to obſerve ſuch rules as appear to them moſt conduſive to the purpoſes of divine and brotherly love [——" But theſe things being as they are, as each is perſuaded in his own mind, is it not a moſt deſirable thing, that we ſhould: Firſt, Remove hindrances out of the way? Not judge one another, not envy one another? Not be diſpleaſed with one another's gifts or ſucceſs, even though greater than their own? Not wait for one another's halting; much leſs wiſh for it, or rejoice therein?——Never ſpeak diſreſpectfully, ſlightly, coldly, or unkindly of each other? Never repeat each other's faults, miſtakes or infirmities; much leſs liſten for and gather them up? Never ſay or do any thing to hinder each other's uſefulneſs, either directly or indirectly?——Is it not a deſirable thing, that we ſhould: Secondly, Love as brethren? Think well of and honour one another? Wiſh all good, all grace, all gifts, all ſucceſs, yea rather than our own to each other? Expect God will anſwer our wiſh, rejoice in every appearance thereof, and praiſe him for it? Readily believe good of each other, as readily as we once believed evil?——Speak reſpectfully, honourably, kindly of each other? Defend each other's character: ſpeak all the good we can of each other: recommend one another, where we have influence: each help the other on in his work, and enlarge his influence by all the means we can?"

I do not ſee why ſuch a plan might not be, *in ſome degree*, admitted by all the miniſters of the goſpel, whether they belong to, or diſſent from, the eſtabliſhment. I would extend my brotherly

love

love to *all chriſtians* in general, but *more* particular to *all proteſtants*, and *moſt* particularly to all the proteſtants *of the eſtabliſhed church*,* with whom I am joined by repeated ſubſcriptions to the ſame articles of religion, by oaths of canonical obedience, by the ſame religious rites, by the uſe of the ſame liturgy, by the ſame prerogatives, and by the fulleſt ſhare of civil and religious liberty. But, God forbid, that I ſhould exclude from my brotherly affection, and occaſional aſſiſtance, any true miniſter of Chriſt, becauſe he caſts the goſpel net among the Preſbyterians, the Independents, the Quakers, or the Baptiſts! If they will not wiſh me good luck in the name of the Lord, I will do it to them. So far as they cordially aim at the converſion of ſinners, I will offer them the right hand of fellowſhip, and communicate with them in ſpirit. They may, excommunicate me, if their prejudices prompt them to it: they may build up a wall of partition between themſelves and me; but *in the ſtrength of my God*, whoſe love is boundleſs as his immenſity, and whoſe mercy is over all his works, *I will leap over the wall*; being perſuaded, that it is only daubed with untempered mortar, and made of babel-materials. Should not chriſtian meekneſs, and ardent love, bear down party-ſpirit and the prejudices of educa-

* The plan of a *particular* reconciliation and union between the profeſſors, who receive the xxxix Articles, will be laid before the public in a ſeparate tract, if the author's days are lengthened a little. The conſiſtency of the moderate *Calviniſm* and *Arminianiſm*, contained in thoſe Articles, will form the ground of that plan.

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tion? The king tolerates and protects us all, the parliament makes laws to ensure toleration and quietness, peace and mutual forbearance: and shall we, who make a *peculiar* profession of the faith which works by love, and binds upon us the new commandment of laying down our lives for the brethren:——shall *we*, I say, be less charitable and more intolerant than our civil governors, who perhaps make no such profession? Let bigotted Jews and ignorant Samaritans dispute, whether God is to be worshipped on mount Moria, or on mount Gerizim: let rigid church-men say, that a parish-church is the only place where divine worship ought to be performed, whilst stiff Dissenters suppose, that their Meeting-Houses are only Bethels in the land; but let us, who profess moderation and charity, remember the reconciling words of our Lord, *The hour cometh, and now is, when true worshippers shall worship God* every where *in spirit and in truth. For the Father seeketh such* catholic and spiritual persons *to worship him*; and not such partial and formal devotees, as the Jews and Samaritans were in the days of our Lord.

But to return to our plan of reconciliation: might not some additions be made to Mr. Wesley's draught; for it is from a letter published in his thirteenth journal, that I have extracted the preceding sketch of union? Might not good men and sincere Ministers, who are bent upon the inheriting the seventh beatitude, form themselves into *a society of reconcilers*, whatever be their denomination, and mode of worship? Interest brings daily to the Royal Exchange a multitude of Merchants, ready to deal with men of the most opposite customs,

cuſtoms, dreſſes, religions, and countries: and ſhall not the love of peace, and the purſuit of love, have as great an effect upon the children of light, as the love of money, and the purſuit of wealth, have upon the men of the world? There is a ſociety *for promoting religious knowledge among the poor:* ſome of its members are Church-men, and others Diſſenters: ſome are Calviniſts, and others Arminians; and yet it flouriſhes, and the deſign of it is happily anſwered. Might not ſuch a ſociety be formed *for promoting peace*, and love among profeſſors? Is not *charity* preferable to *knowledge?* And if it be well to aſſociate, in order to diſtribute Bibles and Teſtaments, which are but the *letter* of the goſpel: would it not be better to aſſociate, in order to diffuſe peace and love, which are the *ſpirit* of the goſpel? There is another reſpectable *Society for promoting the chriſtian faith among the heathen:* and why ſhould there not be a ſociety for promoting unanimity and toleration among chriſtians? Ought not the welfare of our fellow chriſtians to lie as near our hearts, as that of the heathen? There are in London, and other places, aſſociations for the preventing and extinguiſhing of fires. As ſoon as the miſchief breaks out, and the alarm is given, the firemen run to their fire-engines; and without conſidering whether the houſe on fire be inhabited by Church-men or Diſſenters, by Arminians or Calviniſts, they venture their lives to put out the flames: and why ſhould there not be aſſociations of peace-makers, who, the moment the fire of diſcord breaks out in any part of Jeruſalem, may be ready to put it out by all the methods, which the goſpel ſuggeſts? Is not the fire of hell, which

which conſumes ſouls, more to be guarded againſt, than that fire which can only deſtroy the body?

Should it be aſked what methods could be purſued to extinguiſh the fire of diſcord, and kindle that of love: I reply, that we need only be as wiſe as the children of this world. Conſider we then how they proceed to gain their *worldly* ends; and let us go, and do as much to gain our *ſpiritual* ends.

Many gentlemen, ſome laymen and others clergymen, ſome Church-men and others Diſſenters, wanted lately to procure the repeal of our articles of religion. Notwithſtanding the diverſity of their employments, principles and denominations they united, wrote circular letters, drew up petitions, and uſed all their intereſt with men in power, to bring about their deſign. —Again; Some warm men thought it proper to blow up the fire of diſcontent in the breaſts of our American fellow-ſubjects. How did they go about the dangerous work! With what ardor did they ſpeak and write, preach and print, faſt and pray, publiſh manifeſtos and make them circulate, aſſociate and ſtrengthen their aſſociations, and at laſt venture their fortunes, reputations, and lives in the execution of their warlike project! Go, ye men of peace, and do at leaſt half as much to carry on your friendly deſign. Aſſociate, pray, preach, and print for the furtherance of peace. When ye meet, conſult about the means of removing what ſtands in the way of a fuller agreement in principle and affection, among all thoſe who love Chriſt in ſincerity: and decide if the following queries contain any hint worthy of your attention.

Might

Might not moderate Calviniſts ſend with ſucceſs circular letters to the rigid Calvinian brethren; and moderate Arminians to their rigid Arminian brethren, to check raſhneſs, and recommend meekneſs, moderation, and love?——Might not the Calviniſt miniſters, who patronize the doctrines of grace, diſplay alſo the doctrines of juſtice, and open their pulpits to thoſe Arminian miniſters, who do it with caution? And might not the Arminian miniſters, who patronize the doctrines of juſtice, make more of the doctrines of grace, preach as nearly as they can like the judicious Calviniſts, admit them into their pulpits, and rejoice at every opportunity of ſhewing them their eſteem and confidence?——Might not ſuch moderate Calviniſts and Arminians as live in the ſame towns, and have from time to time a general ſacrament, and invite one another to it, to cement brotherly love by publicly confeſſing the ſame Chriſt, by jointly taking him for their common head, and by acknowledging one another as fellow-members of his myſtical body?——Might not ſome of the miniſters, on theſe occaſions, preach to edification on ſuch texts as theſe: "Chriſt aſked them, what was it that ye diſputed among yourſelves by the way? But they held their peace: for by the way they had diſputed, who ſhould be the greateſt: and he ſaith unto them, If any man deſireth to be firſt, the ſame ſhall be laſt of all, and ſervant of all.——Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Maſter and Lord: and ye ſay well; for ſo I am. If I then, your Lord and Maſter, have waſhed your feet, you ought alſo to waſh one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye ſhould do

as I have done unto you.——Receive ye one another as Chriſt alſo received us.——Yea, him that is weak in the faith receive you, but not to doubtful diſputations.——Let us not judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a ſtumbling block or an occaſion to fall in his brothers way.——Let us follow after thoſe things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another: holding the head, from which all the body having nouriſhment, and knit together, increaſeth with the increaſe of God.——Behold, how good and how pleaſant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon Aaron's head, and like the dew upon mount Sion; for there the Lord commanded the bleſſing, and life for evermore."——Could not the ſociety having correſponding members in various parts of the kingdom, to know where the flame of diſcord begins to break out, that by means of thoſe mighty engines, the tongue, the pen, the preſs, they might with all ſpeed direct ſtreams of living water——floods of truth and kindneſs, to quench the kindling fire of wrath, oppoſe the waters of ſtrife, and remove whatever ſtands in the way of the fire of love? ——And if this heavenly fire were once kindled, and began to ſpread, might it not in a few years, reach all orders of profeſſors in Great Britain, as the contrary fire has reached our brethren on the continent? If we doubt the poſſibility of it, do we not ſecretly ſuppoſe, that Satan is ſtronger to promote diſcord and contention, than Chriſt is to promote concord and unity? And in this caſe, where is our faith? And where the *love* which *thinketh no evil*, and *hopeth all things?* If one or two warm men have

have kindled on the Continent so great a fire, that neither our fleets nor our armies neither the British nor the German forces employed in that service, have yet been able to put it out; what will not twenty or thirty, burning with the love of God and of their neighbour, be able to do in England? We may judge of by what twelve fishermen did 1700 years ago. Arise then ye sons of peace, ye sons of God, into whose hands these sheets may fall. Our captain is ready to lead you to the conquest of the kingdom of love. Be not discouraged at the smallness of your number, nor at the multitude of the men of war, who are ready to oppose you. Jesus is on your side: He is our Gideon. With his mighty cross he has smitten the foundation of the altar of discord: pull it down. Break your narrow pitchers of bigotry. Hold forth your burning lamps: let the light of your love shine without a covering. Ye loving Calvinists, fall upon the necks of your Arminian opponents: and ye loving Arminians, be no more afraid to venture among your Calvinian antagonists. You will not find them cruel Midianites, but loving Christians: methinks that your mingled lights have already chased away the shades of the night of partiality and ignorance. You see you are brethren: you feel it: and ashamed of your former distance, you now think you can never make enough of each other, and testify too much your repentance, for having offended the world by absurd contentions, and vexed each other by *inimical* controversies. The first love of the christians revives: you are *all of one heart and of*—But I forget myself: I antedate the *time of love*, which I so ardently wish to see.———The

Jericho of bigotry, which I desire to compass, is strong: the Babylon of confusion and division, I would fain demolish, is guarded by a numerous garrison, which thousands of good men think it their duty to re-inforce. It may not be improper therefore to make one more attack upon these accursed cities, and to ensure the success of it by proper directions.

SECTION VII.

Some Directions how to secure the Blessings of Peace and Brotherly Love.

DO *all things without disputing*, says St. Paul, *that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke.—Be at peace among yourselves; and if it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men:* but especially with your brethren in Christ. *Nor quench the spirit*, by destroying its most excellent *fruits*, which are *peace and love.* And that we may not be guilty of this crime, the Apostle exhorts us to *avoid contentions*, and assures us, that God will *render indignation to them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth.* It highly concerns us therefore, to enquire how we shall escape the curse denounced against the *contentious*, and *live peaceably* with our fellow-professors. And if we ought to do *all that lieth in us*, in order to obtain and keep the blessing of *peace*; surely we ought to follow such directions as are agreeable to scripture and reason. I humbly hope, that the following are of this number.

DIREC-

DIRECTION I. LET us endeavour to do juſtice to every part of the goſpel; carefully avoiding the example of thoſe injudicious and raſh men, who make a wide gap in the north-hedge of the garden of truth, in order to mend one in the eaſt or ſouth-hedge. Let every evangelical doctrine have its proper place in our creed, that it may have its due effect on our conduct. Conſideration, repentance, faith, hope, love, and obedience, have each a place on the ſcale of goſpel-truth. Let us not breed quarrels by thruſting away any one of thoſe graces, to make more room for another. Whilſt the philoſopher exalts conſideration alone; the Carthuſian, repentance; the Soliſidian, faith; the Myſtic, love; and the Moraliſt, obedience: thou, man of God, embrace them all in their order, nor exalt one to the prejudice of the reſt. Tear not Chriſt's ſeamleſs garment, nor divide him againſt himſelf. He demands our reverential obedience as our *King*, as much as he requires our humble attention as our *Prophet*, and our full confidence as our *Prieſt*. It is as unſcriptural to magnify one of his offices at the experience of the others, as it would be unconſtitutional to honour George III. as king of Ireland, and to inſult him as king of England or Scotland. And it is as provoking to the God of truth and order, to ſee the ſtewards of his goſpel-myſteries make much of the diſpenſation of the *Son*, whilſt they overlook the diſpenſation of the *Father*, and take little notice of the diſpenſation of the *Holy Ghoſt*; as it would be provoking to a parent to ſee the perſons, whom he has entruſted with the care of his three children, make away with the youngeſt, and ſtarve the

eldeſt, in order to inrich and pamper his ſecond ſon. Where moderation is wanting, peace cannot ſubſiſt: and where partiality prevails, contention will ſoon make its appearance.

II. Let us always make a proper diſtinction between *eſſential* and *circumſtantial* differences. The difference there is between the Chriſtians and the Mahometans, is eſſential: but the difference between us and thoſe, who receive the Scriptures, and believe in Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, is in general about non-eſſentials: and therefore, ſuch a difference ought not to hinder *union*; although in ſome caſes, it may, and ſhould prevent a *cloſe* communion. If we fancy that every diverſity of doctrine, diſcipline, or ceremony is a ſufficient reaſon to keep our brethren at arm's length from us, we are not ſo much the followers of the condeſcending Jeſus, as of the ſtiff and implacable profeſſors, mentioned in the goſpel, who made much ado about aniſe and cummin; but ſhamefully neglected mercy, forbearance, and love.

III. Let us leave to the Pope, the wild conceit of infallibility; and let us abandon to bigotted Mahometans, the abſurd notion, that truth is confined to our own party, that thoſe who do not ſpeak as we do are *blind*, and that orthodoxy and ſalvation are plants, which will ſcarcely grow any where but in our own garden. So long as we continue in this error, we are unfit for union with all thoſe, who do not wear the badge of our party. A phariſaic pride taints our tempers, cools our love, and breeds a forbidding reſerve, which ſays to our brethren, *Stand by: I am more* orthodox *than you.*

IV. Let

IV. Let us be afraid of a ſectarian ſpirit. We may indeed, and we ought to be more familiar with the profeſſors with whom we are more particularly connected; juſt as ſoldiers of the ſame regiment are more familiar with one another, than with thoſe who belong to other regiments. But the moment this particular attachment grows to ſuch a degree, as to make a party in the army of king Jeſus, or of king George; it breaks the harmony which ought to ſubſiſt between all the parts, and hinders the general ſervice which is expected from the whole body. In what a deplorable condition would be the king's affairs, if each colonel in his army refuſed to do duty with another colonel: and if inſtead of mutually ſupporting one another in a day of battle, each ſaid to the reſt: "I will have nothing to do with you and your corps: you may fight yonder by yourſelves, if you pleaſe: I and my men will keep here by ourſelves, doing what ſeems good in our own eyes. As we expect no aſſiſtance from you, ſo we promiſe you, that you ſhall have none from us. And you may think yourſelves well off, if we do not join the common enemy, and fire at you; for your regimentals are different from ours, and therefore you are no part of our army."——If ſo abſurd a behaviour were excuſable, it would be among the wild, cruel men, who compoſe an army of Tartars or Savages: but it admits of no excuſe from men, who call themſelves *believers*, which is another name for the *followers of Him*, who laid down his life for his enemies, and perpetually exhorts his ſoldiers to love one another as brethren,—yea, as he has loved us.

Let

Let us then particularly beware of *inordinate self-love.* It is too often the real source of our divisions; when *love to truth* is their pretended cause. If St. Paul could say of fallen believers in his time, *They all seek their own*; how much more can this be said of degenerate believers in our days? Who can tell all the mischief done by this ungenerous and base temper? Who can declare all the mysteries of error and iniquity, which stand upon the despicable foundation of the little words, *I, me,* and *mine?* Could we see the secret inscriptions, which the searcher of hearts can read upon the first stones of our little Babels, how often should we wonder at such expressions as these:—*My* church—*my* chapel—*my* party—*my* congregation—*my* connections—*my* popularity—*my* hope of being esteemed by my partizans—*my* fear of being suspected by them—*my* jealousy of those who belong to the opposite party—*my* system—*my* favourite opinions—*my* influence, &c. &c? To all those *egotisms* let us constantly oppose these awful words of our Lord, *Except a man deny* HIMSELF, *he cannot be my disciple.* Till we cordially oppose our inordinate attachment to our own interest, we *sacrifice to our own net* in our public duties: and even when we *preach Christ*, it is to be feared, that we do it more *out of contention*, than out of a real concern for *his* interest.

What Dr. Watts writes on this subject is striking "Have we never observed what a mighty prevalence the applause of a party, and the advance of self-interest, have over the hearts and tongues of men, and inflame them with malice against their neighbours? They assault every different opinion with rage and clamour: they

they rail at the perſons of all other parties to ingratiate themſelves with their own.—When they put to death [*or bitterly reproach*] the miniſters of the goſpel, they boaſt like Jehu when he ſlew the prieſts of Baal, *Come and ſee my zeal for the Lord:* and as he deſigned hereby to eſtabliſh the kingdom in his own hands; ſo they to maintain the reputation they have acquired among their own ſect. But ah! How little do they think of the wounds that Jeſus the Lord receives by every bitter reproach they caſt on his followers.

V. Let us be afraid of needleſs ſingularity. The love of it is very common, and leads ſome men to the wideſt extremes. The ſame ſpirit which inclines one to wear a hat cock'd in the height of the faſhion, and influences another to wear one in full contrariety to the mode; may put one man upon minding only the *firſt* goſpel-axiom, and the blood of Chriſt, whilſt another man fancies, that it becomes him to mind only the *ſecond* goſpel-axiom, and the *law* of Chriſt. Thus, out of ſingularity the former inſiſts upon faith alone, and the latter recommends nothing but morality and works. May we deteſt a temper, which makes men delight in an unneceſſary oppoſition to each other! And may we conſtantly follow the example of St. Paul, whoſe charitable maxim was, to *pleaſe all men to their edification!* So ſhall *our moderation be known to all men:* nor ſhall we abſurdly break the balance of the various truths, which compoſe the goſpel ſyſtem.

VI. Let us never blame our brethren but with reluctance. And when love to truth, and the intereſt of religion, conſtrain us to ſhew the abſurd or dangerous conſequences of their miſtakes;

miſtakes; let us rather underdo than overdo. Let us never hang *unneceſſary* * or *falſe* conſequences upon their principles: and when we prove, that their doctrine *neceſſarily* draws abſurd and miſchievous conſequences after it, let us do them the juſtice to believe, that they do not ſee the *neceſſary* connexion of ſuch conſequences with their principles. And let us candidly hope that they deteſt thoſe conſequences.

VII. LET us, ſo far as we can, have a friendly intercourſe with ſome of the beſt men of the various denominations of Chriſtians around us. And

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* I humbly hope, that I have followed this part of the direction in my Checks. To the beſt of my knowledge, I have not fixed one conſequence upon the principles of my opponents, which does not *fairly* and *neceſſarily* flow from their doctrine. And I have endeavoured to do juſtice to their piety, by declaring again and again my full perſuaſion, that they abhor ſuch conſequences. But whether they have done ſo by my principles, may be ſeen in my *Genuine Creed*, where I ſhew, that the abſurd and wicked conſequences, which my opponents fix upon the doctrine I maintain, have *abſolutely nothing* to do with it. I do not however ſay this to juſtify myſelf in all things; for I do not doubt, but if I had health and ſtrength to reviſe my Checks, I ſhould find ſome things, which could have been ſaid in a more guarded, humble, ſerious and loving manner. And I am ſorry, that even in this piece [See *Bible-Armin.* page 23.] an illuſtration of that ſtamp ſhould have eſcaped the corrections of my reconciling pen. I can only ſay, that I wrote that page ſome years ago; that though the argument to me ſeems juſt, yet I now diſapprove the ludicrous, offenſive dreſs in which it appears; and that I would alter it, if the ſheet was not printed off. I humbly beg my Calviniſt brethren to forgive me this, and the like touches of a pen, which I thought it my duty to keep as ſharp as I could, not to wound their perſons, but effectually to deſtroy their miſtakes—important

And if we have time for much reading, let us peruse their best writings, to be edified by the devotion which breathes through their works. This will be an effectual means of breaking the bars of prejudice, contempt, fear, and hard thinking, which unacquaintedness puts between them and us. Why are savages frighted at the sight of civilized men? Why do they run away from us as if we were wild beasts? It is because they have no connexion with us, are utter strangers to the good-will we bear them, and fancy we design to do them mischief. Bigots are religious savages. By keeping to themselves, they contract a shyness for their fellow-

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mistakes, which the very page I complain of, shew us to be closely connected with antinominian delusions, if it be compared with the unguarded assertions of the rigid Calvinists, whom I have quoted in the *second* and *third checks to antinomianism*. But, I repeat it, whilst I oppose the *imaginary* imputation of Christ's righteousness, to an antinomian, who makes Christ the minister of sin; I triumph in the *real* imputation of Christ's righteousness to a penitent sinner, who receives Christ as a Saviour from the pollution, as well as from the guilt of sin: and I declare once more, that as a guilty sinner, I will never urge any plea before God, but that of the publican; namely, the mercy of the Father, through the Son's blood and righteousness. Should the reader ask, "In what then do you differ from a solifidian? I reply, that I do not differ from a pious solifidian with respect to a *sinner's* justification. But we disagree with respect to a *believer's* justification. A solifidian supposes, that God will justify *sinners* in the great day, whereas our Lord declares, that he will then justify none but *saints*, none but the *righteous*; and the difference between saints and sinners—between the righteous and the wicked, does not consist in an external imputation of Christ's merits; but in an inherent participation of Christ's purity. See the note, page 14.

christians:

chriſtians: they fancy that their brethren are monſters: they aſk with Nathanael, *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?* By and by they get into the ſeats of the Phariſees, and peremptorily ſay, that *Out of Galilee ariſeth no prophet.* And it is well if they do not *turn in a rage* from the precious truths delivered by ſome of the moſt favoured ſervants of God; fondly ſuppoſing with Naaman, that the Jordan of their brethren is not to be compared with the rivers of their own favourite Damaſcus; and uncharitably concluding with the Pope, and Mahomet, that all waters are poiſonous except thoſe of their own ciſtern. The beſt advice which can be given to theſe unprejudiced people, is that which Philip gave to Nathanael, who fancied, that Jeſus was not a prophet: *Come and ſee.* I would ſay to Calvinian bigots, *Come and ſee* your Arminian brethren: and to Arminian bigots, *Come and ſee* pious Calviniſts; and you will be aſhamed to have ſo long forfeited the bleſſing annexed to brotherly communion: for *they that fear the Lord, ſpeak often one to another, and the Lord hearkens and hears it, and a book of remembrance is written before him for them.——And they ſhall be mine, ſaith the Lord of hoſts in that day when I make up my jewels.*

VIII. Let our religion influence our hearts as well as our heads. Let us mind the practice as well as the theory of Chriſtianity. The bare *knowledge* of Chriſt's doctrine *puffeth up, but charity edifieth. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love*, and would have us to be loving and *merciful as he* is. He receives us notwithſtanding our manifold weakneſſes and provocation; and he ſays, by his Apoſtle,

Forgive

Forgive one another, as God for Chriſt's ſake hath forgiven you.——*That ye may with one mind, and one mouth glorify God.* How far from this religion are thoſe, who, inſtead of receiving one another, keep at the greateſt diſtance from their brethren, and perhaps pronounce damnation againſt them; the men who raſhly condemn their *weak brother* to *periſh*, who cannot be cloſe followers of our *merciful High-Prieſt*, who *died for him*, who *is touched with a feeling of our infirmities*, and *has compaſſion on them that are ignorant and out of the way. If any man ſay, I love God—the love of Chriſt conſtraineth me*——*and* yet *hateth his brother*, or ſhuns a reconciliation with his fellow-ſervants, *he is a liar: for he who loveth not his brother, whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God whom he hath not ſeen? This commandment have we from* Chriſt, *that he, who loveth God, love his brother*, yea, his enemy, *alſo.* And love is *pure, peaceable, gentle, eaſy to be intreated, and full of mercy. It ſuffereth long, and is kind, it envieth not, it is not puffed up, it does not behave itſelf unſeemly, it ſeeketh not its own, it beareth all things, it endureth all things, it believeth and hopeth all things*, and it attempteth many things, that chriſtians may *be made perfect in one*, and may *keep the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace.* Where this love is not, the practice of chriſtianity is abſent. We may have the brain of a chriſtian, but we want his tongue, his hands, and his heart. We may indeed ſay many ſweet things of Chriſt: but we ſpoil them all if we ſpeak bitterly of his members; for he who toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye; and he who wounds *them*, wounds him in the

tendereſt part. Hence the ſeverity of our Lord's declarations: *Whoſoever offendeth one of theſe little ones, who believe in me, it were better for him, that a millſtone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the ſea.——And whoſoever ſhall* [uncharitably] *ſay to his brother, Thou Fool! ſhall be in danger of hell fire,* [as well as a murderer.] Matt. xviii. 6.——v. 22. So dreadful is the caſe of thoſe, who make ſhipwreck of the faith which works by charity, whilſt they contend for real or fancied orthodoxy.

We ſhall readily ſet our ſeals to the juſtice and propriety of theſe terrible declarations, if we remember that when chriſtians offend againſt the law of kindneſs, they ſtab their religion in her very vitals, becauſe chriſtianity is the religion of love. From firſt to laſt it teaches us love—free, diſtinguiſhing, matchleſs love. *The Father* ſo loved the world as to give his only begotten Son that we might not periſh. He freely delivered him up to death for us all, and with him he gives us all things; forgiveneſs, grace and glory.—The Son, who when he was in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with him, influenced by obedient love to the Father and tender pity towards us, aſſumed our nature, became a prophet to teach the religion of love—a king to inforce the law of love—a prieſt and a victim dying for the breaches of the law of love. He lived to keep and inforce the law of love: he wept, agonized and ſweated blood to ſhew the force of ſympathizing love: he died on the croſs to ſeal with the laſt drop of his vital blood the plan of redeeming love. He ſunk into the grave, and deſcended into Hades,

Hades, to shew the depth of love. He rose again to secure the triumph of love: he ascended into heaven to carry on the schemes of love. From thence he sent, and still sends, upon obedient believers, the spirit of burning; baptizing them with the Holy Ghost, and with the fire of love, which many waters cannot quench; and from thence he shall come again, to send the unloving and contentious to their own place, and to crown loving souls with honour, glory and immortality. The office of the Holy Ghost, answers to the part which the Father and the Son bear in our redemption. When we receive him according to the promise of the Father, we receive him as the spirit of love—he sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts—he testifies to us the love of Christ, and *his fruit*, in our hearts and lives, is *love*, *joy*, *peace*, *long-suffering*, *gentleness*, *goodness*, and *meekness*. This loving spirit is so essential to christianity, that if you ask St. Paul and St. John an account of their religion, the former answers, *The end* of christianity, is charity out of a pure heart, of a good conscience, and a faith unfeigned: and therefore, if any christian loveth not the Lord Jesus in his person and in his mystical members, he is accursed, Maranatha. The Lord cometh to cut in sunder that wicked servant, and to appoint him his portion with hypocrites in outer darkness. As for St. John, he thus describes christianity. Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, every one that loveth is born of God.——We love him because he first loved us.——And every one that loveth God who *begat* believers, *loveth them also that are begotten* of him:———

and this commandment we have from him, that he who loveth God love his brother alſo. ——St. James's teſtimony to the religion of love, will properly cloſe that of St. Paul and St. John. *Hearken, my beloved brethren,——— If ye fulfil the royal law, Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf, ye do well: but if ye have reſpect to perſons* [much more if ye bite and devour your brethren] *ye are convinced of the law as tranſgreſſors: for whoſoever ſhall keep the whole law* [of love] *and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.* He ſhews himſelf a bad chriſtian———a fallen believer. Therefore, *Speak not evil one of another, brethren,——— nor grudge one againſt another, leſt ye be condemned: behold, the judge ſtandeth at the door.* And Chriſt the judge confirms thus the teſtimony of his Apoſtles, in his awful account of the day of judgment. Then ſhall the king ſay unto them on his right hand, *Come, ye bleſſed, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, for* ye were kind and loving to me. *The head of every man is Chriſt,* and therefore, *In as much as ye have done it* [that is, in as much as ye have been kind and loving] *unto one of the leaſt of theſe my brethren, ye have done it unto me:* [ye have been kind and loving to me:] and I will give you *the reward of the inheritance.——Then ſhall he ſay unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye curſed. For* ye were not kind and loving to me: and if they plead not guilty to the charge, he will *anſwer them ſaying, Verily I ſay unto you: inaſmuch as ye did it not unto one of the leaſt of theſe, ye did it not unto me:* that is, Inaſmuch as ye were not kind to one of theſe, ye were not kind and loving to me. *And*

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these unloving men *shall go away into everlasting punishment*: *but the righteous* [i. e. the loving and merciful] *into life eternal.*——— How plain is this religion! and how deplorable is it, that it should be almost lost in clouds of vain notions, wild opinions, unscriptural systems, empty professions, and noisy contentions! Were professors to embrace this practical christianity, what a revolution would take place in Christendom! The accuser of the brethren would fall as lightning from heaven, and genuine orthodoxy would combine with humble charity to make the earth a paradise again.

IX. Lastly: If we will attain the full power of godliness and be peaceable as the Prince of peace, and merciful as our heavenly Father; let us go on to the perfection and glory of Christianity; let us enter the full dispensation of the Spirit. Till we live in the pentecostal glory of the church: till we are baptized with the Holy Ghost: till the Spirit of burning and the fire of divine love have melted us down, and we have been truly cast into the softest mould of the gospel: till we can say with St. Paul, *We have received the Spirit of love, of power, and of a* spiritual *sound mind*:——till then we shall be carnal rather than spiritual believers: we shall divide into sects like the Jews, and at best we shall be like the disciples of John and of Christ before they had received the gift of the Holy Ghost. We shall have an envious spirit; we shall contend about superiority, and be ready to stop those who do good, because they do it not in our way, or because they follow not with us. And supposing we once tasted the

firſt love of the church, and had really the love of God and of our neighbour *ſhed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt given unto us*: yet if this *love is grown cold*, or if we *have left it*, by grieving or quenching the Spirit; we are fallen from Pentecoſtal Chriſtianity, and inſtead of continuing in diſintereſted fellowſhip, like the primitive Chriſtians; we ſhall *ſeek our own*, as the fallen Philippians; or we ſhall divide into parties like thoſe Corinthians to whom St. Paul wrote: *Some of you have not the knowledge of* the *God* of love; *I ſpeak this to your ſhame.—I cannot ſpeak to you as to ſpiritual, but as to carnal* believers, *even as to babes in Chriſt. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and ſtrife, and diviſions, are ye not carnal, and walk as* the *men* of the world?—— *Examine yourſelves* therefore, *whether ye be in the faith: prove your own ſelves:* is Chriſt in you? Have ye the ſpirit of power, or have ye obliged him to withdraw? And are ye ſhorn of your ſtrength as Sampſon was, when the ſpirit of the Lord was departed from him?—— Alas! who can ſay, how many believers are in this deplorable caſe without ſuſpecting it? The world knows that they are fallen, but they know it not themſelves. They make ſport for the Philiſtines by their idle contentions, and they dream that they are the champions of truth. O may they ſpeedily *awake to righteouſneſs*, and ſee their need of *righteouſneſs, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt!* And may *power from on high* reſt again upon them! So ſhall they break the pillars of the temple of diſcord, rebuild the temple of peace, and be *continually in it, praiſing and bleſſing God*, inſtead of accuſing and provoking their brethren.

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SECTION VIII.

Farther Motives to a ſpeedy Reconciliation:—An Exhortation to it.

I. ABOVE *all things*, ſays St. Peter, *have fervent charity among yourſelves. Little children*, ſays St. John, *love one another.* Sweet precepts! but how far are we from regarding them, whilſt we give to bitter zeal, or to indifference, the place allotted to the communion of ſaints, and to burning love! Had theſe apoſtolic injunctions a due effect upon us, how would the fervent charity, which victorious faith kindles, ſet fire to the chaff of our idle contentions, and make us aſhamed of having ſo departed from the goſpel, as to give the world to underſtand [if men may judge of our doctrine by our conduct] that the ſcriptures exhorts us to fall out one with another, and to mind charity *leſs* than every thing; whereas it enjoins us to mind it *above* ALL *things*, above all honour, pleaſure, and profit,—yea, above all knowledge, orthodoxy, and faith.

II. We are commanded to *glorify God with one heart and one mouth.* Our lips ſhould be inſtruments of praiſe, ever tuned to celebrate the Prince of peace,—ever ready to invite all around us to the goſpel-feaſt; the feaſt of divine and brotherly love. To neglect this labour of love is bad; but how much worſe is it to be as *ſounding braſs*, as a *tinkling cymbal*, as an infernal kettle-drum, uſed by the accuſer

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of the brethren, to call profeſſors from the good fight of faith, to the deteſtable fight of *needleſs* or *abuſive* controverſy, and perhaps to the bloody work of perſecution? Who can deſcribe the injury done to religion by the champions of bigotry! An ingenious writer being one day deſired to draw in proper colours, the figure of *Uncharitableneſs*, the monſter which has ſo narrowed, diſgraced, and murdered Chriſtianity; "I will attempt it, [ſaid he] if you will furniſh me with a ſheet of large paper, and that of the faireſt kind, to repreſent the Chriſtian Church in this world. Firſt, I will pare it round, and reduce it to a very ſmall compaſs; then with much ink will I ſtain the whiteneſs of it, and deform it with many a blot. At the next ſitting I will ſtab it through rudely with an iron pen: and when I put the laſt hand to complete the likeneſs, it ſhall be beſmeared with blood." And ſhall we lend our common enemy iron-pens, or tongues ſharpened like the murderer's ſword, that he may continue to wound the members of Chriſt, and deform the Chriſtian Church?—God forbid! Let as many of us as have turned our pens and tongues into inſtruments of idle contention, apply them henceforth to the defence of peace, and brotherly love.

III. If we refuſe to do it, we practically renounce our baptiſm: for in that ſolemn ordinance, we profeſs to take God for our common Father, Chriſt for our common Saviour, and the Spirit for our common Sanctifier. When we receive the Lord's ſupper in faith, we ſolemnly bind this baptiſmal engagement upon ourſelves, and tie faſter the knot of brotherly love, by which we are joined to *all thoſe, who in every place*

place call upon the name of Jeſus Chriſt, their Lord and ours. Now can any thing be more antichriſtian and diabolical, than for perſons who conſtantly *communicate*, to live in diſcord, and perhaps to inſult one another in a manner contrary to the firſt rules of heathen civility? O ye, who furround our altars, and there *humbly beſeech Almighty God continually to inſpire the univerſal church with the ſpirit of unity and concord, that all who confeſs his holy name may live in unity and godly love*; can any thing equal your ſacrilegious guilt, if after ſuch a ſolemn prayer, you not only refuſe to *live in unity and godly love* with your pious Calvinian or Arminian brethren, but alſo breathe *the ſpirit of diſcord*, and live in variance and ungodly contentions with them, merely becauſe they do not pronounce *Shibboleth* with all the emphaſis, which your party puts upon ſome favourite words and phraſes? If we continue to offer ſo excellent a prayer, and to indulge ſo deteſtable a temper, are we not fit perſons to fight under the banner of Judas? Do we not with a kiſs betray the Son of man in his members? Do we not go to the Lord's table to ſay, *Hail, Maſter!* and to deliver him for leſs than thirty pieces of ſilver, for the poor ſatisfaction of pleaſing the bigots of a party, or for the miſchievous pleaſure of breaking the balance of the goſpel-axioms, and rending the doctrines of grace from thoſe of juſtice.

IV. *God is love.* Let us be like *our Father who is in heaven.* Satan is uncharitableneſs and variance; deteſt we his likeneſs, and let not the faithful and true witneſs be obliged to ſay to us one day: *You are of your father the devil, whoſe works ye do*, when you keep up diviſions.

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The devil, says Archbishop Leighton, being an apostate spirit, revolted and separated from God, doth naturally project and work *division*. This was his first exploit, and is still his grand design and business in the world. He first *divided* our first parents from God, and the next we read of in their first child, was enmity against his brother. The tempter wounded *truth*, in order to destroy *love:* and therefore he is justly called by our *Saviour a* LIAR, *and a* MURDERER *from the beginning*. He murdered our first parents by lying, and made them murderers by drawing them into his uncharitableness. God forbid that we should any longer do the work of the father of lies and murderers! Heaven prevent our committing again two so great evils as those of wounding truth, and preventing love!—of *wounding truth* by attacking the scripture-doctrine of free-grace and free-agency! and of *preventing love*, by hindering the union of two such large bodies of professors, as the Calvinists and the Arminians! Nor let any lover of peace say, "I will *not hinder* the reconciliation you speak of;" for it is our bounden duty to *further* it by a speedy, constant exertion of all our interest with God, and influence with men: otherwise we shall be found *unprofitable*, *slothful* servants, and shall be judged according to this declaration of our Lord, *He that gathereth not with me scattereth*. For he, who, in so noble a cause as that of truth and love, is *neither cold nor hot*, pulls down upon his own head the curse denounced against the lukewarm Laodiceans.

V. The sin of the want of union with our pious *Calvinian* or *Arminian* brethren, is attended with peculiar aggravations. We are not only

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fellow-creatures, but fellow-ſubjects, fellow-chriſtians, fellow-proteſtants, and fellow-ſufferers [in reputation at leaſt] for maintaining the capital doctrines of ſalvation by faith in Chriſt, and of regeneration by the Spirit of God. How abſurd is it for perſons, who thus ſhare in the reproach, patience and kingdom of Chriſt, to embitter each other's comforts, and add to the load of contempt, which the men of the world caſt upon them? Let Pagans, Mahometans, Jews, Papiſts, and Deiſts do this work. We may reaſonably expect it from them. But for ſuch Calviniſts and Arminians as the world lumps together under the name of *Methodiſts*, on account of their peculiar profeſſion of godlineſs,—for ſuch *companions in tribulation*, I ſay, to *bite and devour* each other, is highly unreaſonable, and peculiarly ſcandalous.

VI. The great Apoſtle of modern infidels, Mr. Voltaire, has, it is ſuppoſed, cauſed myriads of men to be aſhamed of their baptiſm, and to renounce the profeſſion of chriſtianity. His prophane witticiſms have ſlain their thouſands: but the too cogent argument, which he draws from our diviſions, has deſtroyed its myriads. With what exultation does he ſing,

Des Chretiens diviſés leſs infames querelles
Ont, au nom du Seigneur, apporté plus de maux, *&c.*

"The ſhameful quarrels of divided Chriſtians, have done more miſchief under religious pretences, made more bad blood, and ſhed more human blood, than all the political contentions, which have laid waſte France and Germany, under

under pretence of maintaining the balance of Europe." And ſhall we ſtill make good his argument, by our ridiculous quarrels? Shall we help him to make the world believe, that the goſpel is an apple of diſcord thrown among men, to make them diſpute with an acrimony and an obſtinacy, which have few precedents among men of the moſt corrupt and deteſtable religions in the world? Shall we continue to point the dagger with which that keen author ſtabs chriſtianity? Shall we furniſh him with new nails to crucify Chriſt afreſh in the ſight of all Europe; or ſhall we continue to clinch thoſe, with which he has already done the direful deed? How will he triumph if he hears, that the men who diſtinguiſh themſelves by their zeal for the goſpel in England, maintain an unabated conteſt about the doctrines of *grace* and *juſtice*—a conteſt as abſurd as that in which the Whigs and Tories would be involved, if they perpetually debated whether the *houſe of Lords*, or that of *Commons*, makes up the Britiſh parliament; and whether *England* or *Scotland* forms the iſland of *Great Britain!* And with what ſelf-applauſe will he apply to us what the Apoſtle ſays of wicked heathens and apoſtate chriſtians? *Becauſe when they knew God, they glorified him not as God*—the ſovereign, righteous God of love and juſtice—*they became vain in their imaginations, and their fooliſh heart was darkened. Profeſſing themſelves wiſe, they became fools; being filled with envy, debate, malignity; whiſpers, backbiters, deſpiteful, without underſtanding, without* brotherly *affection, implacable; ——having a form of* godly orthodoxy, *but denying the power of* peaceable charity?

VII. Inſtead

VII. Instead of continuing to give avowed infidels such room to laugh at us and our religion, would it not become us to stop, by a speedy reconciliation, the offence given by our absurd debates? Should we feel less concern for the honour of christianity, than Sir Robert Walpole did for the honour of the crown. It is reported, that when he stood at the helm of the British empire, he was abused in parliament by some members of the privy-council. Soon after meeting with them in the king's cabinet, he proceeded to the dispatch of business with his usual freedom, and with a remarkable degree of courtesy towards his enemies. And being asked how he could do so: he replied, "The king's business requires union. Why should my master's affairs suffer loss by the private quarrels of his servants?" May the time come, when the ministers of the king of peace, shall have as much regard for his interest, as that minister shewed for the interest of his royal master! Do not circumstances in church and in state, loudly call upon us to unite, in order to make head against the enemy of Christ and our souls?—An enemy terrible as the banded powers of earth and hell, headed by the prince of the air, whose name is *Abaddon—— Apollyon—Destroyer?*

VIII. Ye are no strangers to the craft and rage of that powerful adversary, O ye pious Calvinists and godly Arminians: for *ye wrestle not with flesh and blood* only, *but with the principalities and powers* of the kingdom of darkness! Cease then, cease to spend in wrestling one against another, the precious talents of time, strength and wisdom, with which the Lord has entrusted you, to resist your infernal

antagoniſt. Let it not be ſaid, that Herod, a Jew, and Pilate, a Heathen, became friends, and united to purſue *the Lamb of God* to death; and that you fellow-proteſtants, you Britiſh believers, will not agree to *reſiſt the devil, who goes about as a roaring lion, ſeeking whom he may devour.*

You are aſtoniſhed when you hear, that ſome obſtinate lawyers, are ſo verſed in chicanery, as to protract for *years*, law-ſuits, which might be ended in a few days. Your controverſy has already laſted for *ages*; and the preceding pages ſhew, that it might be ended in a few hours: ſhould you then ſtill refuſe reaſonable terms of accommodation, think, O think of the aſtoniſhment of thoſe, who will ſee you protract the needleſs contention, and entail the curſe of diſcord upon the next generation.

Our Lord bids us *agree quickly with* our *adverſaries*; and will ye for ever diſpute with your friends? Joſeph ſaid to his brethren, *ſee that ye fall not out by the way*; and ſo far as we know, his direction was faithfully obſerved. Chriſt ſays to us, Wear my badge: *By this ſhall all men know, that you are my diſciples, if ye love one another.* And will ye ſtill fall out in the way to heaven, and exchange the chriſtian badge of *charity*, for the ſatanic badge of contention?

Paſſionate Eſau hath vowed, that he would never be reconciled to his brother. Nevertheleſs he relented; and as ſoon as Jacob was in ſight, *he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kiſſed him; and they wept*, Gen. xxxiii. 4. And ſhall it be ſaid, that Eſau, the hairy man, the fierce hunter, the ſavage who had reſolved to imbrue his hands

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in his own brother's blood, the implacable wretch, whom ſo many people conſider as an *abſolute* reprobate—ſhall it be ſaid, that Eſau was ſooner ſoftened than you?—He was reconciled to his brother, who had deprived him of Iſaac's bleſſing by a lie; and they lived in peace ever after. And will ye never be reconciled one to another, and live peaceably with your Calvinian or Arminian brethren, who far from having deprived you of any bleſſing, want you to ſhare the bleſſing of holding with them the doctrines of grace, or thoſe of juſtice?

The prince of life *died, that he might gather together in one the children of God, who are ſcattered abroad*, John xi. 52. And will ye defeat this important end of his death? He *would gather you as a hen gathers her brood under her wings*; and will ye purſue one another as hawks purſue their prey? Or keep at a diſtance from each other, as lambs do from ſerpents? Cannot Chriſt's blood, *by which you are brought nigh to God*, bring you nigh to each other? Does it not *ſpeak better things than the blood of Abel?*—kinder things than your mutual complaints? Does it not whiſper peace, mercy, gentleneſs and joy? *In Chriſt Jeſus neither* rigid Calviniſm *availeth any thing, nor* rigid Arminianiſm, *but faith which worketh by love*; draw near with *faith* to the chriſtian altar, which ſtreams with that peace-ſpeaking blood. Behold the bleeding Lamb of God, and become gentle, merciful and loving.—See the anti-type of the brazen ſerpent! He hangs on high and ſays, *When I am lifted up, I will draw all men unto me:* and in me they ſhall centre, as the ſolar beams centre in the ſun.—And will ye reply; "We will not be obedient to thy drawings: we will

not be concentered in thee with our Calvinian or Arminian brethren. Thy father may ſacrifice thee to *ſlay the enmity, and ſo make peace:* and thou mayeſt lay down thy life to make *reconciliation*; but reconciled to each other we will not be; for the god of diſcord draws us aſunder, and his infernal drawings we will obey?" If you ſhudder at the thought of ſpeaking ſuch words, why ſhould you ſo behave, that whoever ſees you, may ſee, they are the language of your conduct,—a language, which is far more emphatical than that of your lips?

Say then no longer, *Have us excuſed*; but *come to the banqueting houſe*—the temple of peace, where *the Lord's banner over you will be love*, and his mercy will *comfort you on every ſide. If there be therefore any conſolation in Chriſt, if any comfort of love, if any fellowſhip of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies; fulfil ye the joy* of all who wiſh Sion's proſperity: *Be like-minded, having the ſame love, being of one accord, of one mind, ſubmitting yourſelves one to another in the fear of God.—He is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jeſus Chriſt, in whom there is neither Greek nor Jew, neither bond nor free*, neither Calviniſt nor Arminian, *but Chriſt is all in all. My heart is enlarged: for a recompence in the ſame, be ye alſo enlarged*, and grant me my humble—perhaps my dying requeſt: reject not my plea for peace. If it be not ſtrong, it is earneſt; for (conſidering my bodily weakneſs) I write it at the hazard of my life;—Animamque in vulnere pono.

But why ſhould I drop a hint about ſo inſignificant a life, when I can move you to accept of terms of reconciliation by the life and death —by

by the reſurrection and aſcenſion of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt?—I recall the frivolous hint; and by the unknown agonies of him, whom you love; *who in the day of his fleſh offered up prayers and ſupplications, with ſtrong crying and tears, unto him, who was able to ſave him from death*;—*by his* ſecond *coming*; *and by our gathering together unto him, I beſeech you, put on as the* [proteſtant] *elect of God, bowels of mercies, kindneſs, humbleneſs of mind, meekneſs, long-ſuffering*; *forbearing one another, and forgiving one another*: *even as Chriſt* loved and *forgave you, ſo alſo do ye.* Inſtead of abſurdly charging one another with hereſy, embrace one another, and *triumph* together *in Chriſt. Come up out of the wilderneſs* of idle controverſy, *leaning upon* each other *as brethren, holy and beloved*: and with your joint forces attack your common enemies, phariſaiſm, antinomianiſm, and infidelity. Bleſs God, ye Arminians, for raiſing ſuch men as the *pious* Calviniſts, to make a firm ſtand againſt phariſaic deluſions, and to maintain with you the doctrines of man's fallen ſtate, and of God's partial grace, which the Pelagians attack with all their might. And ye Calviniſts, rejoice, that heaven has raiſed you ſuch allies as the *godly* Arminians, to oppoſe Manichean deluſions, and to contend for the doctrines of holineſs and juſtice, which the Antinomians ſeem ſworn to deſtroy.

Jeruſalem is a city which is at unity in itſelf. As ſoon as ye will cordially unite, the Proteſtant-Jeruſalem will become a praiſe in the earth. The moment ye join creeds, hearts and hands, our reproach is rolled away: the apoſtacy is ended: the apoſtolical, pentecoſtal church returns from her long captivity in myſtical Babylon.

Babylon. The *two ſtaves, Beauty* and *Bands become one in the hand* of the great ſhepherd, who *writes upon it*, Bible-Calviniſts reconciled to Bible-Arminians. [See *Zech.* xi. 7. and Ez. xxxvii. 16, 17.]—Thus united, how happy are ye among yourſelves! How formidable to your enemies!—The men of the world are aſtoniſhed, and ſay: *Who is ſhe, that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the ſun, and terrible as an army with banners.* —Surely it is a church formed upon the model of the primitive church. Theſe people are Chriſtians indeed. See how they *provoke one another to love and to good works!*

Such will be the fruit of your reconciliation, and ſuch the glory of *the Shulamite*, THE PEACEFUL CHURCH!—But, *before I am aware, my* [longing] *ſoul makes me like the chariots of Aminadab*, to go and admire that truly reformed church, whoſe members *are all of one heart and of one ſoul.* O ye pious Calviniſts, and godly Arminians, if you deſire to ſee her glory, expreſs your wiſh in Solomon's prophetic words, Cant. vi. 10, 12, 13. *Return, return, O Shulamite: return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye ſee in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies*:—the combined force of the good men, who maintain the doctrines of grace and juſtice, and who, by their union, they will become ſtrong enough to demoliſh modern *Babel*, and to batter down *Phariſaiſm* and *Antinomianiſm*, the two forts by which it is defended. For phariſaiſm will never yield, but to the power of Bible-Calviniſm and the doctrine of grace. Nor can antinomianiſm be conquered, without the help of Bible-Arminianiſm and the doctrines of juſtice.

tice. And when phariſaiſm and antinomianiſm ſhall be deſtroyed, the *church* will be *ſanctified, cleanſed, and ready* to be *preſented to Chriſt—a glorious church, not having ſpot, or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing.* Then ſhall we ſing with truth, what we ſing without propriety:

Love, like death, has *all* deſtroyed,
Rendered all diſtinctions void:
Names, and ſects, and parties fall,
Thou, O Chriſt, art all in all.*

In the mean time, let us rejoice in hope, and ſing with the chriſtian poet,

Giver of peace and unity,
Send down thy mild, pacific dove:
We all ſhall then in one agree,
And breathe the ſpirit of thy love.

We all ſhall think and ſpeak the ſame
Delightful leſſon of thy grace;
One undivided Chriſt proclaim,
And jointly glory in thy praiſe.

Regard thine own eternal prayer,
And ſend a peaceful anſwer down:

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* When I hear contending Calviniſts and Arminians agree to print and ſing this verſe, I am tempted to cry to them, *Be at peace among yourſelves*, or ſing at your love-feaſts;

Love has *not* our pride deſtroy'd,
Render'd our diſtinctions void:
Names, and ſects, and parties *riſe:*
Peace retires, and mounts the ſkies.

To

To us thy father's name declare;
Unite, and perfect us in one.

So ſhall the world believe and know,
That God has ſent thee from above;
When thou art ſeen in us below,
And every ſoul diſplays thy love.

THE END.